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THE

PARIS SPECTATOR;

OR,

L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSÉE-D'ANTIN.

CONTAINING

Observations

UPON

PARISIAN MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Translated from the French.

By W. JERDAN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1815.

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

GEORGE CANNING,

&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

IN offering to the Public the Translation of a Work written on the Model of *The Spectator*, it is with no common feelings of gratification, that I avail myself of your kind permission to enrich this Production with another feature of resemblance to its great Original.

To the most enlightened Statesmen, the most elegant and accomplished Scholars, the most brilliant Wits, and distinguished Orators of that day, were the Volumes of Addison severally inscribed:—it is by a rare felicity that the *Paris Spectator* may be dedicated to one who unites in himself all the high Characteristics which belong to those Individuals; and that all that was admired in the Somers', Boyle's, Halifax's, Sunderland's, and Wharton's of a former era, may receive a new tribute in the person of the Right Honourable George Canning.

Scarcely daring to hope that the Hermit of the *Chaussée-d'Antin* in

his English garb may be sanctioned by your approbation, I beg to present this Translation to you, as a testimony of the high Respect and Esteem, with which,

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obliged,

And obedient Servant,

WM. JERDAN.

LITTLE CHELSEA,
June, 1815.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Essays upon the Manners and Customs of Paris at the commencement of the Nineteenth Century, under the signature of '*L'Hermite de la Chaussée-d'Antin*,' appeared originally in the *Gazette de France* Daily Newspaper: they were inserted almost regularly once a week, and very soon excited the attention, and obtained the applause of the Public. Their success indeed was greater than that of any similar attempt in France. The *Cafés* were crowded on the mornings of their periodical return, and the

lucubrations of the Hermit generally formed the conversation of the day among all ranks of the Parisians.

Encouraged by this marked approbation, M. Jouy, the Author of these Papers, collected them into Volumes, and in that form they were received with the same unanimous favour which they experienced on their first appearance. In this way five Volumes were published in succession; the last of them, long after the Translation now offered to the English Reader, was undertaken.

It seemed impossible that any picture of such manners should be other than curious, and acceptable

to this Country, after the fitful intercourse and long exclusion which circumstances had created, for a quarter of Century, between two interesting Nations, only divided by a narrow channel: and the accurate and characteristic touches of M. Jouy, appeared to the Translator to have so far increased the natural attraction of the subject, as to leave little doubt of its susceptibility to be transferred with advantage into our Language. With this view, a Selection of the Essays has been made, in which those most descriptive of the Customs, &c. of Paris are retained, and those omitted which are found-

ed on Anecdotes already well known in the British Essayists, or are so little illustrative of French habits and manners as to be destitute of that charm which might have recommended them to public attention.

A Translation from the French is so much within a schoolboy's endowments, that any apology for its imperfections may look like an acknowledgment of being perhaps more incompetent to the task, than one who ventures to lay his Production before the world, would wish to have believed. Some indulgence is however claimed for these Volumes. The Wit of our neighbours often depends so entirely on the turn of a phrase, that

it is not easy to adhere to the sense of the passage with that fidelity, which is the soul of Translation, and at the same time transfuse its spirit into another tongue. The difficulty lies between an imitation and a close rendering of the text, and sometimes in avoiding the Scylla and Charybdis of too much freedom on the one hand, and too servile an adherence on the other, the vessel is foundered in the middle current. But the greater obstacle which presented itself to a faithful and spirited Translation of this Work, arose from the perpetual recurrence of local allusions, of words and sentences the cant of high or low life, and of newly coined terms,

which even a long residence in Paris, and an intimate acquaintance with its fashions and follies, could not render altogether intelligible. If error has crept into any of these passages, the rod of criticism will, it is hoped, be administered without severity.

It is unnecessary to prolong these *introductory* Remarks, which, as is usual in such cases, are penned at a period when the Work they precede is finished, and it is too late to mend any thing. With whatever faults may be upon his head, a hope is entertained that the Hermit may meet with some of the same kindness in England, which was so liberally bestowed upon him in his native land.

THE

PARIS SPECTATOR;

OR,

L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSÉE-D-ANTIN.

No. I.—17TH AUG. 1811.

PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR.

Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum.
Il y a des avantages qui sont le fruit des années.
HOR. ART. POET.
Age brings with it some advantages.

To the Editors of the Gazette de France.

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN you know me better, you will not be surprised at my being acquainted with the object which, at this moment, occupies your minds. You have formed the project

of laying before your readers a hebdomadary bulletin of the state of Paris; you do not yet know to whom you can entrust the task: without further preamble I offer you my services. A few words respecting my person, history, and character, will, I believe, convince you that, leaving talents out of the question, I possess at least *instinct* for the business I am desirous of undertaking.

Before telling you my age, against which you might muster some objections, I ought to inform you that there is not a young man in all Paris (not excepting the junior clerk of an attorney in full practice) who travels over so much ground in this capital, in a week, as I do every day. After this averment I need not be afraid to let you into the secret, that I was born on the 21st July 1741. There are clever persons who may conclude from this fact that I am seventy: 'tis possible;—years are the favours of time, and I keep no reckoning with my friends! An insatiable curiosity was the earliest of

my apparent prédilections. Thus, at the age of thirteen, I set out to run over the whole world. I made the voyage with our celebrated navigator, Bougainville; I traversed the three continents; visited almost every nation on the globe; and thirty years elapsed before I came back to France. Surfeited with travelling like Scarmantado, I took, as he did, a wife, on my return. I am not sure of having experienced the same fate; neither did I discover *that marriage was the sweetest condition of life.* To tell the whole truth, my house was a hell: I was miserable; I gave vent to my bile in a tale, in which I drew the picture of a wife, vain, meddling, shrewish. Mine recognised the likeness, and, on this ground, sued me for a separation. I had the happiness to lose my suit. Behold me again free. I thought of nothing but the means of arranging my mode of life, so as to combine this blessing of independence with that instinct of curiosity which forms the basis of my character, and to which I could no

where resign myself more entirely and more agreeably than in Paris:—thence I determined never more to wander. I hired a neat little house outside of the barriers, on the way to Clichi, and close to the high road which the Duke d'Antin had caused to be made. ('Tis from that circumstance, by the bye, that my nickname of the Hermit of the Chaussée d'Antin is derived; it was presently conferred upon me with some reason, and custom has confirmed the title.) I imagine I must have lived more than two centuries when I reflect upon the changes that have taken place around me during the forty years I have been a tenant, not indeed of the same lodging, but upon the same spot. I can literally say that Paris has come to seek me. The meadow on which I dwelt is covered with edifices in the shape of a street; my little house, which I rented at a hundred crowns a-year, is transformed into a magnificent hotel, where the proprietor has handsomely retained for me a habitation in the garret; I

pay indeed four times as much as I did for the whole house which I before occupied; but a man likes to remain on the spot where he has been tolerably happy for nearly half a century.

That you, Gentlemen, may know a little better who I am, it behoves me to tell you what I have done: nothing, absolutely nothing; I go, I come, I look, I listen, and I note down, in the evening, all that I have seen and heard during the day. From these notes, I will briefly make you acquainted with the manner in which I employ myself.

I rise at five o'clock in the morning in summer, and at seven in winter. As nobody is stirring in Paris at such hours, except in the *Halle* and other markets, I direct my steps, in the first instance, to these places. The habit of seeing me so often renders the market-folks careless of my observation; I learn all the mysteries of trade; how baskets are *composed* with a

little fine fruit at top; how withered vegetables are coaxed to look fresh; by what address flowers are grafted on shrubs which have lost every blossom they possessed. I see the *maitres-d'hotel* and the cooks of great houses arrive, and I know better than their masters what price they pay for the articles they carry home.

From the markets I generally take a walk upon the Quay, and ascertain the number and the nature of the arrivals there; thence I proceed to the Palais Royal, where I breakfast, at the Café de Foi, the Café de Chartres, or the Café Valois alternately, as I feel inclined, to hear arguments upon politics, finance, or commerce. About noon, I betake myself to the Reading room of M. de Laage, in the Rue de Grammont, where I skim over the public papers.

Well or ill informed on the events passing in Europe, I leave the news-room to pay my customary visit to an old friend in

the Fauxbourg Saint-Germain, Madame de L*****, with whom I seldom fail to enjoy, before dinner, a ride in a carriage to the Bois de Bologne. Madame de L*****, who has spent her life at court, and has no other fault but that of firmly believing that it is impossible to live elsewhere, relates to me a multitude of amusing anecdotes concerning the most celebrated persons of the present epoch, and of past times; I collect an *Ana* not at all inferior to those of M. Cousin d'Avalon. Returning from this excursion, I visit the Café Tortoni, where I have got into the habit of taking an ice before dinner, with an ancient and very learned Italian Doctor, who never mentions Rome without doffing his hat.

The physical and moral regime which I have prescribed for myself, joined to my unalterable custom of going every evening to the theatre, induces me to refuse all invitations to dinner, which, after all, are not half

so pleasing as the suppers of former days. I pass all the Restaurateurs in successive review, and without attaching to the gastronomic science so much importance as Mr. G . . . . de la R . . . ., I am competent to reason, in a satisfactory way, upon the discoveries which have been made therein since the period when I used to dine at three livres a head at the Hotel d'Angleterre, upon every thing, which was then the very best in Paris. As I am, for causes which I shall unfold to you at a proper opportunity, admitted *free* to all the theatres, it is not an uncommon thing to see me, on the same evening, at the Opera, the Theatre Feydeau, and the Comedie Française. This, I assure you, is the only trait in which I resemble M. de R . . . . . I am acquainted not only with the parentage, but with the offspring of all the performers of the chief theatres; I have been present at all the débuts of actors and actresses, and witnessed every success and every failure

since the year 1764*. You will observe, therefore, that I am perfectly able to furnish you with anecdotes and news from the green-room.

As for fashions, which necessarily form part of a publication of the nature you announce, it is probable you may imagine that I am a stranger to matters of that sort; but you will be of a very different opinion when you learn that I have in my possession a complete collection of French *costumes*, from the coat of the Sicambri, our ancestors, to the docked frock of the young gentlemen of the present day; that I have preserved specimens of all the coats, all the hats, and all the perriwigs, which I have myself worn during the last fifty years; and that the whole, properly labelled, are arranged according to chronological order in a museum of a kind altogether novel and unprecedented.

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* Our author forgets here the length of his travels.—*Translator.*

After this exposition, it is for you, Gentlemen, to determine whether or not I am a person competent to perform the task which I am desirous of undertaking.

I have the honour to be,
&c. &c.

No. II.—Aug. 31st, 1811.

THE GODFATHER.

Stultum me fateor.

Hor. Sat. iii. Liv. 11.

J'avoue ma folie.

I confess my folly.

Reading some months ago the little Poem of the magnificent Godfather * (which I deposited, according to a new arrangement of my books, upon a particular shelf in my library beside *Ossian's Poems* and *Clotilde*, &c.) I little expected that I should

* Parrain Magnifique.

myself very soon experience the miseries of the Canon, at which I laughed so heartily. So true it is

Qu'il ne se faut jamais moquer des misérables.
That we ought never to make game of the unfortunate.

I consider myself bound to lay before the public an account of my disaster; it is a beacon, for the benefit of others, which I erect upon the rock against which I was dashed.—About eleven o'clock last Wednesday night, I had established my quarters in an excellent elbow chair, constructed after the model of that of our brave and worthy Abbe M . . . . . and was, according to my custom before going to bed, glancing over one of those pamphlets of the day which are read with as little trouble as they are written, when my servant announced M. le Comte de V. . . . . the principal occupant of the Hotel which I inhabit. I shall narrate our conversation as the best method of making you acquainted with the motive for his visit. "a thousand pardons,

neighbour, for disturbing you at this hour; but circumstances will sometimes excuse an indiscretion." "Fortunately your tone re-assures me; but for that, Count, I should have feared that some calamity had befallen you." "Quite the contrary, my wife is brought to bed." "Of a boy?" "You have hit it!" "Not but that I had my suspicions from the air of importance of all the Females of the hotel whom I encountered in going out this morning." "That remark is fine." "I would not lay a wager that Sterne had not made it before me; but be that as it may, I congratulate you on the happy event which you have yourself had the politeness to announce." "That is not however the object of my visit; my motive is:—my wife is, like others, infected with her *little superstitions*; and the work of M. Salgues,* which I have taken care she should read, has not eradicated her faith in omens. Some days previous to her

* Des préjugés répandus dans la Société, &c.

accouchement she paid a visit to Mlle. Le Normand, and the Conjuror of the Rue de Tournon predicted *that she would have a boy whose destiny, in all points, should resemble that of the godfather whom she chose for him.* You ought also to be told that my wife, to whom our common friend Madame de L. . . . . has communicated your history to the most minute details, considers you to be the prototype of human felicity, and consequently is anxious to ensure the happiness of her son by entreating you, through me, to become his godfather."

This proposal struck me as a little too fantastical; I eluded it as long as possible, but at last consented, from the idea that there was something to be respected even in the weakness of a mother, and that after all, there was nothing more required of me than a simple act of complaisance.

The christening was settled for the following day. I had not held up an infant since the year 1775, and the fashion might

be altered. I run to Mme. de L. . . . for a lesson to qualify me for my new office. More careful of my reputation than of my purse, she gave me instructions of the consequences of which I was ignorant, and addresses of merchants of whose prices I knew nothing. I consequently proceed to Tessier the Perfumer at the *Golden Clock*, (I was wont to employ Fargeon); I shew Mme. de L——'s note, and they hand me a baptismal gift-basket, exquisitely tasteful it is true;—but eighty francs! I would have exclaimed against the price had I not been prevented by being told that they never chaffer nor abate any thing at the *Golden Clock*. The young lady of the counter, with such as whom it is very embarrassing to have any discussion about money matters, arranged in the basket, with a grace altogether peculiar—

Six dozen pairs of gloves, superfine and assorted; *two fans*, the one embroidered in steel, the other in *blonde* scale work, and enriched with a spy glass;

A *bouquet* of artificial flowers which would have puzzled the eye of a botanist;

Some ridicules, two flasks of essence of Rose, a stand of *pastiles of the Seraglio,* of all which articles she presented me with a bill, on a pretty vignette, amounting to 420 francs. I thought the sum enormous; I was tempted to relinquish the cursed basket; but the false shame of a school-boy restrained me: I took, one by one, twenty-one Napoleons from my purse; I told them down with equal accuracy upon the mahogany counter, and I rushed out of the elegant warehouse firmly resolved never in my life to enter it again. My bargain was made; I desired at least to reap the praise which my liberality merited. I returned to Madame de L. . . . to shew her my purchase. "It is very well!" said she, "the basket is neat, and *not extravagant*. The godmother will be content with it.

"There are yet however a few other trifles which you want, and which I have selected for you myself:

" For the lady in the straw, a night-lamp plated with gold at *Odiot's*, and a porcelaine cup at Dagoty's: I have paid for these two articles twenty louis; but they are the least you could present to a lady who is worth fifty thousand livres a year.

" For the attendant, a cap trimmed with Valenciennes lace, five louis:—that goes for nothing.

" For the nurse, this merino shawl; this is all that is indispensably requisite.

" I was tempted, as I went along, to purchase at Dubief's a coral for the baby; but this would be an expence of eight or ten louis; and in your case you need not go beyond what is strictly necessary. . . ."

I could resist this no longer; but at the last stroke exclaimed, " How, Madam, is it necessary that I should ruin myself for the sake of holding up the infant of a woman I scarcely know, and who believes in the predictions of Mlle. Le-Normand!"—" You ought not to have accepted the office

then; you have done so, and must now do your best to acquit yourself of it honourably."

To this argument I could offer no answer; and in order to punish myself for my folly, I resolved to endure all the consequences: in fine, accounts being cast up, and conforming myself to the usage on such occasions, after having made my offerings of the presents purchased for them, to the godmother, to the lady in bed, to the attendant, and to the nurse; after having given a wax taper to the curate, an oblation to the vicar, drink-money to the beadle, to the porter, and to the bell-man; after having bestowed alms upon the poor of the parish; after having settled the demand of Berthelemot (whose poetry, by way of parenthesis, has raised the price of knick-knacks too much) I found that I had the honour to be godfather to the child of Madame the Countess of V. . . . at the cost of 2375 francs, 20 centimes; and that, as a compensation for my expenditure, I had a

god-son, who was not even named after me, (for excepting myself.... and Pascal, who would in this age consent to be called Blaise?) but who could come punctually enough to visit me on my birthday:* a young and handsome godmother to whom I could not help wishing that she might want a similar office done for herself; and a pair of spectacles in gold, to which I was obliged to get new glasses. Thanks to these *mutual* gifts, I was allowed to stand godfather in the family of M. de V..... and was kept to dinner *without ceremony*. All the concomitants of this phrase were fulfilled to a miracle: the arrival of the young heir had thrown the house into disorder; the cook, the butler, and the principal footman, partaking in the general joy, had given themselves leave of absence for the whole day. At eight o'clock a cold

* For the present annually given by godfathers, according to custom, in France.

repast was served up; the *new-come* squalled in the adjoining apartment, and the accoucheur arrived in the midst of the comfortless meal; my host burnt with impatience to see his wife and child; I perceived that my part in the performances approached its close; and clear with my neighbours, with my godchild, and with all the contributors towards this baptismal pomp, which I had, according to my custom, discharged with ready money, I retired to meditate upon the means of simplifying Christenings.

No. III.—21st Sept. 1811.

THE LIFE OF THE MANOR-HOUSE.

See what delights in Sylvan Scenes appear.

POPE.

Connaissez les plaisirs de la vie Champêtre.

BOILEAU has well said:

Paris est pour un riche un pays de Cocagne,
Sans sortir de *la ville* il trouve la campagne;

London is to the rich a land of joy,
Even in the city, country pleasures cloy.

Reduced within correct bounds, this poetical exaggeration means simply, that in Paris a person of great fortune may enclose between two *streets and within four walls*, a certain number of stunted trees, plats of turf, and flower borders, and make the

whole look fresh and fair by means of a scanty rill of water purchased at the pump, and circulated in the meandrings of a wheel rut cut in plaster: such is the country which is found *without going out of the city* (sans sortir de la ville). As for that which is composed of vast plains, of meadows covered with flocks, of forests watered with delicious streams, of mountains down whose sides torrents are poured, or, where a pure air is breathed, or, where nothing is seen but rustic labours, and nothing felt but rural pleasures; as for that sort of country, I say, however powerful and however rich a man may be, he must bestir himself to travel beyond the city gates, and leave behind him the atmosphere of the capital, before he can taste its exquisite delights.—I never enjoyed them with greater zest than in a little tour which I lately made to *my farm* (I remember the time when I used to call it *my estate)*; and as we never describe objects which please us more happily than while we are still under their influence, I solicit the permis-

sion of my readers (before I again set about rambling over Paris with my memorandum-book in my hand), to cast a glance behind with me on the spot I have just left, and permit me to avail myself of the last fine days of the season to speak of the country, and of all the enjoyments of which wisdom and wealth may there discover the abundant source.

Upon entering *Bocage* (the name of that part of ancient Normandy where my property is situated), I was astonished for the hundredth time in my life, that a country so delicious and only sixty leagues from the capital, should not be covered with mansions and villas. The traveller Moore, in his letters on France, has just reasons for charging the French with negligence and want of consideration in the selection of places where they form establishments. The difficulty of communications which the rich proprietors allege as an apology is not a sufficient justification of this indifference: a moiety of the sums which many of them expend in the labour of reclaiming barren

soils, in creating fictitious hills and streams, and in erecting absurd edifices, would be enough to open commodious roads throughout a country which seems to be designed to captivate and delight the eyes of every beholder.

A thunderbolt had fallen upon the dwelling-house on my farm, and my business was to repair the damage, which I might, in all conscience, have laid to the charge of the farmer, because he had taken upon himself, contrary to my positive orders, to remove the conductor which I had caused to be erected over the principal building; it is true that he alleged as a reason for so doing, "that this was not the fashion of the country, and that his neighbours laughed at him when they saw this great iron spit on the top of his habitation;" but I attached no value to such excuses, and would assuredly have carried the question into a court of law had I been young enough to commence a suit in chancery*.

* Literally "a process in Normandy."

The more we reflect on the subject, and the more we observe, the more firmly will we become convinced of the erroneousness of the greater number of oracular opinions pronounced upon the character of whole nations by some writers, and adopted without examination by others. Every Frenchman is considered to be one of a people the most fickle and inconstant in the world. And yet with the least attention, the slightest inquiry into the character of our nation (except in the capital, where men so readily depart from their natural habits) it will be evident that so far from being inclined to change, the French are the greatest slaves to old prejudices, and the most immovably bigoted to the routine of ancient customs, of any people in Europe.—Among the population of the country, and especially of the western provinces, the truth of this remark is most incontrovertibly apparent. The peasants of lower Normandy are at this hour exactly what they were in the time of William the Conqueror; their

dialect, horses, clothes, and mode of living are in almost every respect the same; civilization has scarcely made any sensible progress among them, and their manners are still as remarkable for purity as for rusticity.

Too near a neighbour to the castle of P——— to be able to dispense with a visit of politeness, I was welcomed by the honourable possessor of that ancient mansion as an old friend of his father. He absolutely insisted upon my taking up my abode at the manor-house; and Madame de P——— enforced this proposal with the most obliging solicitation. She contrived answers to all my objections. "Well! Madam," said I, laughing, "I must make a confession to you, against which even your kindness can urge no sufficient reply; I spent the early part of my life at sea, where one contracts many bad habits, and the latter part of it in that retirement where one does not learn to correct them: and though I must acknowledge it, I do so with all hu-

mility," *I smoke.*—" So much the better," returned the lady, " we have here the room for smokers, and you shall be the companion of my uncle, the Admiral, who smokes like *Jean Bart*, and would not give himself much uneasiness were he to swear as much." There are arguments which possess the authority of law;—on the same evening I was installed a resident of the manor-house. The life which is spent there is most delightful; and as the happiness enjoyed in this family is less the result of opulence than of the union of the most amiable of qualities, of talents, and of tastes, some sketches of the picture may not be unacceptable.

Were I writing a romance, with time and paper before me, I would at the hazard of fatiguing my readers present them, in the newest fashionable style, with a description of one of those places the most beautiful, the most various, the most picturesque, which it is possible to conceive; but both time and space press, and it shall suffice me to

record that the site of the chateau of P——— leaves nothing for the most fertile and jocund imagination to desire. It did not exhibit that extreme freedom which it has so long been made the boast of the *country* to offer, and of its admirers to find; but it did afford all that freedom which is consistent with attention to the habits and the pleasures of others. The society was composed of twelve persons, of whom five belonged to the family of Mr. P———; and among the visitors were five of the most distinguished artists of the capital. The gentlemen rose at an early hour, these to hunt or fish, those, pencil in hand, to study some effects of landscape, and we others, invalids, to gaze once more upon the birth of Aurora. At ten o'clock, all assembled together to breakfast, at which period the ladies made their appearance; some of them rose sooner, but they generally descended together. After breakfast every one occupied and amused themselves, according to their own taste, in a spacious saloon, from

which the billiard table was only separated by an open colonnade. While some exercised themselves at this game, Madame de P——— embroidered or wrought tapestry, the young folks, round the piano-forte, listened to Mr. C———, who run over the divisions of *Dido* or *Armida*, Mademoiselle Pauline de N——— drew a portrait in crayons of her grand-uncle, the *Admiral*, who complained that they kept him too long *in stays*.

From one o'clock till five, every individual was master of his own time, without being accountable to the general society for the manner of its employment: it was this part of the day which the owners of the house devoted to domestic duties, and to the interests of the inhabitants of the place, who still considered themselves in the light of their vassals.

The dinner bell recalled every one to the saloon. Madame de P——— did not appear loaded with that labour of the toilet about her which imposes a similar attention to the etiquette of dress on others; but in

this, as in every thing else, she set the example of simplicity full of taste, and grace, and elegance. It is common enough to find, even in the country, tables more splendid than that of M. de P——; but there are very few in France where the repast is rendered so pleasing; because it is very rare to meet every day in company with four charming women, without the slightest rivalry; men of wit without overbearing pretensions; old men of uniform good tempers, and young men of gaiety, at all times excessive, and yet confined within the most becoming limits. After dinner the ambulatory parties were arranged; some embarked in boats; the solitary pedestrian wandered upon the mountains, while those less inclined to exercise did not go beyond the long alleys of the park: but the most numerous troop generally followed the lady of the mansion, certain that she would ever lead them where there were succours and consolations to be bestowed and blessings to be received.

The period of return is also that of the

arrival of the post; the letters and the journals received, the news learnt and communicated, in giving a new impulse to conversation, decides the character which it shall retain for the remainder of the evening. The last day which I spent at P——— the *only subject* discussed was the comet. The children's tutor, who is almost as great in astronomy as M. Tripotin, began to frighten the ladies by demonstrating to them in a manner peculiarly his own, that our earth could not escape being some day or other pulverized by the shock of one of these vagabond stars, when Madame de St. C——— interrupted him to read to us the postscript of a letter received by her maid from her mother, and which was literally as follows: "Thy mistress and thee, you have ill-chosen your time to go into the country; they *shew* at Paris a superb comet; I have already been to see it three times from the Pont des Arts; and as it may be a thousand years, they tell me, before such

another may be seen, I am very sorry that thou hast lost so fine an opportunity."

The simplicity of this good woman, who fancied that the comet was only visible at Paris, afforded us so much food for laughter, that it was impossible for the Abbé to resume the discussion at the point of gravity to which his reasoning had mounted.

It is usually, by a little concert, that the day thus usefully and agreeably passed is terminated. When the evening is fine, the music is performed in full accompaniment; and perhaps one must have listened to the ravishing voice of Madame A. de St. C—— the harmonious base of M. de la Marre, under the azure of a cloudless sky, in the calmness of night, and amid the repose of the woods, to be able to form an idea of all the power of an art which adds a new charm to the beauties of nature.

DETACHED OBSERVATIONS.

" How, is that you my dear? Already returned to Paris!—*Don't mention it* (Ne m'en parlez pas—a fashionable phrase). I am dead with impatience, with heat, with dust, and with ennui; but you yourself, my darling, how comes it that you are not upon the banks of the Orne, in that *bel respiro*, where we spent so delicious a month last year?—What would you have? Troublesome business, very important, truly.—I am in the same predicament, signatures to give to a notary, a sick child.—No doubt, without reckoning that Alfred could not endure the country.—Without reckoning that your husband does not go.—No matter, I shall only attend one last representation of Armida, and fly back to the fields.—There is nothing else worth enjoying, my dear, the meadows, the woods, the flowers! Alfred is going through a course of botany expressly for me." This conversation, which

chance led me to overhear, passed between two young ladies in the Champs-Elysées: unfortunately some one accosted them, and their colloquy was interrupted; but the note was taken, which will serve as the text for some observations I have made on the predilection of our belles for the country. During winter, and without losing any of the pleasures of this brilliant season, they sigh for the return of spring, dream of nothing but walks by moon-light, breakfasts in dairies, and rural dances under the branches of the ancient oak: at last the month of May arrives; *but* the fine weather is yet uncertain, the mornings are too cool (for persons who never rise before noon), and besides, one would not like to miss the last concerts of the *Conservatoire*, which, after all, are much finer than the earliest songs of the nightingale. It would be desirable to set out upon the first of June, but the workpeople have not yet put up the new billiard table, which is to be placed in the saloon, for the sake of conversation parties.

All is ready by the 15th.; the carts set out on the preceding evening laden with tric-trac tables, chess-boards, parcels of half dozen packs of cards, &c.; the children's tutor has laid in a plentiful magazine of romances; there is a complete collection of the proverbs of Carmontelle; as far as one can see, nothing is forgotten which can minister a relish to the enjoyment of the beauties of nature, and the pleasures of the country. The departure is already a holiday.—In advance, the young gentlemen on horseback, or in light gigs, precede the brilliant calash in which all the young ladies are stowed; the grandfathers, the grandmothers, and the monkeys bring up the rear in the ponderous Berlin. They arrive at the mansion-house; the first moments are delicious; they employ themselves in the arrangement of the apartments, an essential labour, and one which requires, in the mistress of a house, a nicety of tact, a feeling of propriety, an experience of the world, which can only be learnt in Paris. After the second

day they never think of any thing but of devising modes to forget the country and recall the amusements of the city. At eleven o'clock the bell rings to breakfast; but the ladies seldom appear: one has slept so ill that she has gone to bed again after the bath; another pouts; this has a messenger to despatch, and that a romance to finish. The greater part of the time they have a better reason than any of these, but they do not think it worth while to mention it; and besides, is it not agreed that the most perfect liberty is the privilege of the country? It is so simple as to be generally understood; and every one passes the morning as he lists. At five o'clock the first dinner peal warns the gentlemen that it is time to think of dressing (for notwithstanding *the liberty* which is enjoyed in the country, unlucky is he who, seduced by the fascinations of his walk, is so late as to arrive just as dinner is being placed on the table! Politeness forbids him to present himself in the undress of the morning; and he is

obliged to lose those precious moments, in attending to his clothes, for which his appetite demands another employment.) At six o'clock, all are met together in the saloon, bedizened as in a winter evening. It is announced to Madame that dinner is served; they proceed to the dining-room, where the marble pannels and gilt vases, ornamented with artificial flowers, remind you only of the luxury of the city; but when the dessert appears, the beauty of the fruits naturally provokes eulogies upon the country, upon which subject every one prepares to say the finest things in the world, when the master of the house, a sort of *procurante* senator, nips these embryo effusions in the bud, by informing his guests that these magnificent fruits were purchased at the *Halle**, and that he has only fruit-trees with double flowers in his gardens. Rising from table, they adjourn to

* The Covent Garden of Paris.

a sort of pavilion, whence Paris may be seen to its utmost limits, and where it is even easy to amuse oneself by counting the houses through a telescope levelled against the windows. The post hour arrives; they hasten to *re*-descend to the saloon to receive their letters and read the journals, which they snatch and scramble for as at the *Café Valois*. After their perusal, and the discussions which ordinarily ensue, they determine at last upon a promenade: but it is already eight o'clock, the season is moist, damps are dangerous; the young folks remain at billiards—the ladies will not go far. They return at nine o'clock, having only to fill up one more tedious hour before bed-time. Harmless sports are childish, cards very dull, conversation is soon exhausted; they play comedy; they choose a proverb of Carmontelle, and debate the parts; the disputes of the side-scenes are transplanted into the saloon; and if I may be permitted to speak the truth, it is in these petty squabbles that the moments least tiresome

to them are consumed in the country. But even this resource fails, ennui gains ground, every one contrives to have business which furnishes a pretext for spending a day in Paris; these journeys become more frequent, and the beginning of September brings definitively back again to their hotel, in the Faubourg St. Germain, a whole party of people who could right well have dispensed with leaving it.

The majority of the pieces of Dancourt ridicule the manners, customs, and follies peculiar to the epoch at which he wrote; and it must be confessed, that though the gaiety and ease of his dialogue are suitable to all times, his subjects have lost the chief source of their attraction, that of being applicable. Among the small number of his productions, in which he has painted more lasting absurdities, there is one (*The Country House*)* of which the plot and characters are in all points apposite to the

* La Maison de Campagne.

present age. There is a tribe of M. M. *Bernard's* in Paris, who, without the least taste for the country, without any means of satisfying it (should that taste spring up), persuade themselves that they are obliged *to have a country house to relax from business, and entertain a friend or two with pot luck.* Upon examination, nothing can be found more ridiculous than this mania, which in our day descends to the poorest class of citizens. The shabbiest mercer of *Quincampoix* street, the meanest clerk in a low office, must be able to talk of "*my country-seat.*" It is very true, that by this expression is meant, neither a fine abode on the banks of the Seine or Marne, nor a good farm in the forest of Saint-Germain or Fontainebleau, nor even a foot of land in the wood of Meudon, in the valley of Montmorency, or on the hill of Auteuil. What our little cit means by *his country-seat* is about four fathoms square of bog in the *Allée des Veuves*, or more frequently still, a furnished room in the grand street of *Chaillot.*

No. IV.—21st Oct. 1811.

Correspondence.

Mr. Hermit, all the world applies to you for counsel and advice; permit me to do as much, and to put a few questions to you which I desire to have answered, for they relate to a most important matter: you know that our authors speak incessantly of the public, that they appeal to the public judgment, and that *they give their works to the public* (which, by way of parenthesis, does not *take* all that they *give*). The public, it may be said, is in some measure

the divinity of men of letters: it is the public who introduces them to the temple of glory, and rewards them with the crown of immortality. Like many others, I have sought the favours of this divinity, I have offered my prose and my verse upon his altars. I believed at first that my search had not been made in vain; the journals lately said that I was an author dear to the public; but now things are changed: after thirty years of study devoted to please him, the Public knows me no more. This would be a fine opportunity for me to rail against ingratitude, and to write a ponderous book upon the instability and vicissitudes of literary renown.

But I rather love to console myself on the bosom of philosophy, which knows how to appreciate every thing according to its just value, and inspires us with resolution to suffer in silence. In my retirement I have reflected much upon the public, and am at this moment sadly at a loss to

decide where my notions ought to stop. I hope, Mr. Hermit, that you will deign to resolve my doubts; I hope that you will have the goodness to inform me what the public is, where the public is, in what place he pronounces his decrees, how he matures his decisions? In order to find him must we pass the barriers, or cross the Seine? Is he to be met with at Marais, at the Palais Royal, or at the Chaussée-d'-Antin? Does he form his judgments in Paris or in the provinces? For my part, after the most diligent investigation, I am inclined to believe that he is nothing more than a chimera, which has been conjured up to scare us, and that it is with the public as with those ghosts, of which every body talks, but nobody has ever seen.

You will perhaps, Mr. Hermit, become a convert to my opinion, when you are made acquainted with what befel me in my younger days: I was a candidate to the literary societies, in which I believed the public delivered his oracles; I one day

read, in an Atheneum, a little poem of my own composition; I observed that I had tired my auditory; a journal of the following morning did not fail to state that I had given *the public the gapes*. Some time after, I re-read the same poem in another Atheneum, and was excessively applauded by another audience, which was also called the public. I was proud of the plaudits which I had received, but could not forbear saying to myself:—"The public, who, in the same week, is disgusted and delighted with my verses, is very capricious, and perhaps not worth the trouble that I should take in consecrating my labours to him. It is possible, however, said I to myself again, that the public does not deign to reside in an Atheneum."

I next went to seek the public at the theatre, and I procured my first tragedy to be performed. Judge, Mr. Hermit, of my astonishment at this representation: the boxes hissed, the parterre applauded: they quarrelled,—they fought about my piece; I

was almost ashamed of having employed six months of my life in attempting to please a public which could be guilty of such excess. They criticised my tragedy in the journals of the ensuing day: some compared me to Racine, others degraded me beneath the level of Pradon, and yet all of them spoke in the name of the public. "It is possible," said I to myself, once more, "that the public is as great a stranger at the theatre as at the Atheneum; it is also possible that he does not pronounce sentence through the medium of the journals."

From this period I resolved to toil no more either for Atheneums, or for theatres, or for journals; I devoted myself to a work upon morals. "I shall be tried," said I, "by the wisest of mankind, who will form their opinions of me far from the tumult of society, in the quiet of the closet, and, consequently, without partiality and without passion; it is there, doubtless, that I shall find the public, who ought to select the sages of the world for his interpreters; this

once the public fiat upon my book will be consistent; for it is impossible that there can be much diversity of opinion upon the subject of morals." I reasoned thus before my work appeared, and the expected judgment of the public gave me no uneasiness; —but I was again deceived.

My Treatise upon Morals nearly excited a sedition; a great number of readers proclaimed me the benefactor of the age, and of the human race; others accused me of overturning society to its very foundations; the very coldest of my partisans crowned me with laurels, and spoke of raising a statue to me as had been done to Jean Jacques Rousseau; many, who were not of the same way of thinking, assembled every day under my windows, and bellowed aloud that I deserved to be burnt alive for my book upon morals: the contest grew hotter; the parties mutually injured each other in the grossest manner; they even fought about a book which I had written with the view of restoring the golden age, and perpetuat-

ing the joys of peace and union among my fellow creatures.

You will readily guess, Mr. Hermit, that in these traits I did not recognise the public whose suffrages I had contemplated, and whom I had represented to myself as the divinity and oracle of men of letters :— to this good hour I know not what to think of the public ; and I congratulate myself on having forgotten him.

Some describe him as a divine genius who holds in his hands the sword and scales of Themis, weighs the pretensions of authors, and condemns, without appeal, every unworthy production: he is everywhere at once, and steals a look at every thing. Others represent him as an hideous monster, as huge as Polyphemus, and armed with his club ; a thousand snakes hiss upon his head ; he drags along in his train, rage, and pride, and envy ; the groans and shrieks of self-love are music in his ears ; every evening he immolates a victim at the theatre ; every morning he devours an au-

thor for his breakfast. Such are the pictures which imagination draws of the public. For my part, Mr. Hermit, I am unable to form any opinion; it is not the Coterie which proclaims aloud that it is the public, and which, in this capacity, cites the universe before its petty tribunal: it is not a crowd of people who every day fail in respect to the public, who insult him in the journals, who usurp his name to sanction a thousand follies; whence I conclude, that if the public did exist, as we are taught to believe, and was really as vicious as has been represented, he would revenge himself for the outrages committed against him every morning in the newspapers, and every evening in our Atheneums, and upon our stage. As for me, I am firmly persuaded this day that the public is nothing more than a fabulous deity; but if you, Mr. Hermit, have met with him any where, I beg you to inform me how he does, and by what sign his judgments may be identified.

INCREDULUS.

We hope the public will not be too much scandalized at this letter, and that it will be merely considered as the angry tirade of a discontented author. M. Incredulus resembles those savages who pay no respect to their idols any longer than they continue to bestow upon them every thing they desire, and who even go the length of drubbing them soundly when they do not listen to their prayers. We shall content ourselves with repeating to M. Incredulus what the poet Lemierre said upon a time to Laharpe: "*Be only successful, and we shall see.*" (Ayez seulement un succès, et nous verrons.) Finally, we pray the public to look with a favourable eye upon the Works of M. Incredulus.

No. V.—24th Nov. 1811.

GALLERY OF ORIGINALS.

——Locus est et pluribus umbris.

HOR. EP. I.

Le cadre est vaste, on peut ajouter des portraits.

J.

MONTAIGNE recommends to old men to *retreat from life backwards:* I follow this precept, and willingly retire upon my remembrances; I am too busy for the present, and I never think of the future. Some days ago, sitting by my fire I amused myself with looking at two old engravings of 1778, one of which represented *a promenade to the Palais Royal,* and the other *an*

Evening of the Boulevart. Among the number of particular originals who made themselves conspicuous at this epoch in every place of public resort, I had the sincerity to recognise myself among a small group of young folks, tolerably ridiculous. The malignant design of the painter was the more obvious, because in all France there was only M. de Conflans and me who wore our hair cropped and without powder, according to the present fashion. This little discovery afforded me extreme pleasure, and recalled to memory a multitude of circumstances and personages that would otherwise have slept for ever in oblivion. The principal figures in our old caricatures have been designed with so much spirit by Dubucourt, that I, without difficulty, recognised the names of all those whom he exhibited on the scene. I was gravely occupied in writing their names on the margin of the print, for the instruction of posterity, when to my great astonishment I beheld the Baron de Kunpipen, with

whom I had served in America, and whom family business had brought to Paris after twenty-seven years absence, enter my apartment. We had been most intimate, knew each other when *young and superb*; and our first emotion was to burst into laughter upon mutually observing the changes which time had made. After this little ebullition of philosophical gaiety, we talked over our old customs and old recollections, and I shewed him my two engravings. "That is excellent," said he, "I recognise them all. Observe here the splenetic Marquis de Fenille, who was so celebrated for the art of carving at table, and who did to a miracle the honours of suppers to which he was never invited! And this fat Abbé de la Baume who discovered that the invention of playing cards was the last and noblest effort of human genius! And our Polonese Borosky, always on the eve of his departure, and for twenty years taking leave never to go! And the pretty little Viscount de Leiceuil, who never mounted his horse

without being *rouged*, whose coachman displayed at all seasons an enormous nosegay!" . . . . . .

"We no longer see the like of these in Paris: every person, every habit, every character appears to be cast in the same mould."—"My dear Baron, you form your opinion upon a first glance, or you do not now know the proper places for study; spend the day with me, and I pledge myself to shew you originals who do not yield one iota to those at whose expence we were in our youth so often amused, and among the number of whom we were ourselves sometimes ranged." He accepted my invitation, I dressed, and we sallied forth to breakfast at Tortoni's: it was the hour at which the principal frequenters of that Capé were assembled. One of these, leaning upon the counter, chatted with a very pretty little Brunette, who generally filled the place of the mistress of the house. The good demeanour of this young man, a sort of *foreign-ness (étrangeté)* in his manners, and of whimsicality in hi-

dress, attracted the attention of the Baron, who took him for the son of some rich banker. "It is impossible to be more completely mistaken (said I to him as we entered the little saloon on the right, where we were served, slowly enough, with tea and muffins): this person is a foreigner who has resided in Paris twelve years, and whose revenues are founded upon *the love of country*. He thinks it his duty to be always of the same nation or family as those who have a few louis to bestow upon him. Lord M. . . . . lent him last year a hundred guineas upon the credit of the estate of his mother, who he asserted to be an Englishwoman: of Hungarian origin by his father's side he made himself the compatriot of a rich banker of Presburgh, who could not under these circumstances refuse to discount for him a bill of exchange for two thousand florins: one of his Dutch brothers has been worth a hundred ducats to him with the Captain of a privateer of Amsterdam; and he has for six months been re-

ceived at the house of the Count de ——— a Russian Colonel, through the merits of an uncle killed in the service of Paul *the first*. Here he is now reading a journal at the next table; if you are curious to try the experiment upon him yourself, raise your voice a little, say that you are from Munich—we shall see if he has not some Bavarian cousin, by whose means you may in a moment find yourself a kinsman of this numerous family.

"Do you observe close to the window two men of a certain age, one of whom speaks without ceasing, or even allowing the other a moment to squeeze in an answer? The foible of the first is a passion to have it believed by all those who lose their time in listening to him, that he has visited all the capitals of Europe, and that he is better acquainted than any body else with the customs of Vienna, London, Madrid: the fact however is, that this honest man never travelled further than from Compeigne to Fontainbleau, in the service of the king's buttery,

(Gobolet) of which he was an officer. By his air of attention you would suppose that the other is listening to him. He does not comprehend one syllable of all that is uttered, entirely occupied as he is with devising the means he shall employ to make it generally known over Paris, that he was yesterday, or will go this evening to a small box at the Feydeau with a young beauty of the day. A superannuated adorer of this class of females, whom it is politely agreed to call *gallants*, he is to be found in all places where they assemble, and at all the fetes which they give: he tires two Cabriolet horses every morning in executing their commissions, of which he has made memoranda the evening before; and all this without other interest or other hope than that of exciting envy in some young fellows who do not know the extent of the space which vanity fills in the happiness of an idiot."

Sallying forth from Tortoni's, we lounged to the Palais-Royal, where I pointed out

to my Bavarian, the Patriarch of the ancient Opera-Comique, with his huge protuberance of belly, his large boots, his perriwig over his ears, and his hat over his eyes: he trilled, as he shambled along, the burden of an old ballad, at the same time saluting, right and left, a parcel of fools who followed him clapping their hands.

At two we visited the Coffee House *de la Regence*. Among other *characters* I directed the Baron's notice to an ancient customer, who, during the space of thirty years, had not failed five times to come at three o'clock, and read the *Petites-Affiches*,* play two games at chess, say something about his friend Fragonard, and extol as chefs-d'œuvre some wretched pictures in a church which he daubed in his youth.

After dining at Beauvilliers, where we did

* Posting bills such as are stuck on the walls about London, but generally containing an abstract of the principal news of the day from the public journals.

not find those we expected to see, we adjourned to the Opera. Sitting in the Tiring room previous to the rise of the curtain, M. de K. suddenly rises, and runs to embrace an old gentleman, who is walking about with his hands behind his back, in a cloak of quilted taffeta, and who, from his grave demeanour and contemplative air, would be taken for a parliamentary magistrate, or at least for an ancient leader of the order of advocates. "For once, I have met one of ourselves," said the Baron wheeling round to me, "and I can in my turn give you information." "You know then

Quel est son rang, sa patrie, et ses dieux?

his rank, his country, and his Gods." "No, but I know what all the world knows, that he is called Saint-Fernance; that he is the Nestor of gallantry; that he is a thorough master of the edifying chronicle of the opera; that there does not adventure forth a young damsel of the *Magazine* with whose success he is not acquainted; that he can

tell almost to a *louis*, the state of their resources and expences, and that from Mlle. Camargo, whose retirement he witnessed, to Mlle. A. . . . . the last whose debût he directed, he is the person to describe by their names, surnames, and qualities, all the dancers who have appeared upon the stage of the opera since the year 1761."—"You might add that he is known to all the world, that he has been seen behind every theatrical curtain in Europe, and that he has been denominated *The Providence of Loves*. But since we are upon the chapter of Originals in the train of the theatres, and may take another opportunity of seeing *the Caravan*, let us now pay a visit to the *Feydeau*. Hearken to the description of the person I wish you to see there: with hair dressed *a l'oiseau* royal, hat *a l'écuyère*, coat of celestial blue ornamented with buttons of natural history, two superb watch chains hanging down to within three inches of his knee, a coloured cravat, spy-glass in hand, and *solitaire* on finger . . . ."

We entered the orchestra; our hero was at his post, presenting his glass at all the boxes, not for the purpose of ascertaining the ladies whom he does not know, but to cause his diamond, which he sports with infinite grace, to sparkle and attract notice. If you remark this amusing personage for a little while, you must hear him during the performance, make observations on the piece and on the actors in a loud tone of voice which he addresses to himself. He was in fine cue: this day his dress was more elaborate than usual, and he uttered such innocent malice, and comic simplicities, that my friend was enchanted to learn that we might enjoy his society till midnight, by following him to the Coffee House *des Variétés*, whither he never fails to betake himself, when he leaves the Opera-Comique, to peruse the journals with his reading glass in his hand.

Returning home for the night, the Baron (to whom I had yet exhibited only a very small proportion of our richest *Originals*)

was compelled to acknowledge that there was still to be found in Paris, *characters* out of the common order, too often at the expence of good sense and of good taste; but almost all of them oddities whom it was entertaining to notice.

No. VI.—30th Nov. 1811.

MANNERS OF THE ANTI-CHAMBER.

Quid domini facient, audent cum talia fures?
VIRG. ECL. 3.

Que feront les maitres, si les valets se conduisent ainsi?

What will the masters do, if the footmen behave thus?

I HAVE read many treatises on the customs of every age, of every class, of every profession; yet I know nothing of those of servants: the defenders of ignorance will acknowledge that they are not a whit more elevated on that account. It is remarkable, that of all the sayings, and of all the proverbial expressions to which the manners

and the habits of these gentry have given rise, there is not one which redounds to their advantage: we say, *insolent, low, lying, lazy, as a footman; drunken as a coachman; brutal as a porter;* and a hundred other comparisons, all as just, and as little complimentary to the persons who fill these stations. A species of valets, of theatrical construction, who never had, and perhaps never will, have their counterparts in the anti-chamber, have been introduced upon the stage by the authors of ancient and modern comedy. All the valets of Moliere and of Regnard are little prodigies of wit, intrigue, and invention; those of Destouches and of La Chaussée are, for the most part exemplars of disinterestedness, fidelity, and delicacy:—nothing of all this approximates truth. Perhaps, in the wheel of fortune, a young man may engage a *Frontin*, a *Labranche* as adroit at foiling a creditor as expert at delivering a love-letter; perhaps there may be an example of a servant faithful, devoted, grateful; but these are

very rare varieties, and not the natural produce of the species. But be that as it may, it is neither with their vices nor with their good qualities that I have at present any thing to do;—it is only to their faults that I turn my attention. Even these I do not examine with reference to their immediate transactions with their masters, but to the exercise of their duties, and the way in which they fulfil them.

A word or two upon the circumstance which suggested the idea of this article.

One of my fellow citizens and of my oldest friends is now a man of great consequence; merit of every kind has raised him to the eminent situation he occupies, a situation in which he enjoys the inconceivable happiness of having neither rivals nor detractors. He has become rich and powerful, I have remained poor and unnoticed; it belonged to him to renew our intercourse; he had not done so, his occupations prevented him; we had been five years without seeing each other. A few

days ago I received the following note from him:—

"I passed you the other day, and was "anxious to speak with you: we have for "a long time been lost to each other; you "know my reasons, and I am aware of "your's; I have been unhappy, and you "have been wrong. If convenient, I will "expect you to breakfast to-morrow; we "shall be alone."

I was not the description of person to be twice entreated; and, entirely occupied with the pleasure promised by this friendly visit, I bent my way towards the hotel de . . . . in all the simplicity of my common dress, of which I had not, as will be seen by the sequel, calculated all the inconveniences. The hotel was at a great distance from my residence, at the end of the Faubourg Saint-Honore; I was wiping my brow as I entered the gateway, when a rascal of a footman, romping with a chambermaid, knocked me down in attempting to catch the damsel who had, most unceremoniously,

taken refuge behind my body. Instead of the apologies which I expected, our humourist, after measuring me with his eye from head to foot, tossed his long cane into the air, and went off in a roar of laughter, without waiting for the chastisement which I intended to bestow upon him. I advanced into the court, looking about for the porter's lodge;—a groom, who was employed in washing a carriage, splashed me all over; I was angry, and all the answer I obtained to the reproaches with which I loaded him for his awkwardness, was a shout in the voice of a Stentor: "*Complain to the keeper.*" This gentleman opened a large glass door, which led to the Peristyle, and, in the most arrogant tone, demanded why I entered without speaking to any body; I constrained myself to answer him coolly, that there was no inscription to designate the porters' lodge. "That is because there is neither *lodge* nor *porter* here, but a *keeper's house*, d'ye hear?"—"Keeper's house be it (though this designation is not

applicable to you); but yet have the goodness to tell me where it is to be found; and as for you, with your black velvet cap, and your flowered dressing gown, you are more like . . . . ." "Hold your tongue; what do ye want?"—"Your master."—"His Excellency?"—"Yes; his Excellency, the Count de . . . . . my friend, with whom I came to breakfast, and to whom I will speak a couple of words on the insolence of his people."—"Sir, you will pardon us; it was because . . . . ."—"I know, it was because my umbrella shewed that I had not come in a carriage; but where would be the inconvenience of being polite even to persons who walk?" Saying this, I ascended the grand staircase, and reached the first anti-chamber, in the midst of five or six lacqueys, one of whom was engaged in brushing a coat, another dressing his head; these cleaning *quinquets*,* and those playing

* Lamps, so called from a celebrated maker of that name in Paris.—Tr.

picquet on the stove. None of them put themselves in the least out of the way. "Pray Sir, shut the door," said one of the players to me.—"No, I desire that you will open the other for me." "What do you say? . . . *three Aces.*"—"The Count."—"He is not visible . . . *five for the Queen.*" "I have an appointment with him."—"*That won't do.* Is it an appointment by letter?"—"'Tis no business of your's; let me speak with a valet-de-Chambre."

I entered the second room, where I was received in a manner altogether as cavalier by the valets-de-chambre, who were reading the newspapers. As they continued this occupation in my presence, I snatched the journal from the hand of a reader, and ordered him to announce me. A little surprised at my tone and impatience, "his Excellency," said he, "does not receive any one till two o'clock."—"Nobody?"—"No, Sir, nobody, except one of his friends whom he expects to breakfast."—"And suppose that were me!"—"You Sir?" (always casting a glance towards my umbrella)—"Yes me—

" go, and announce M. de Tr . . . . . ." He instantly stepped before me with a profound bow; one of his comrades, after having, with much respect, taken my great coat and the unlucky umbrella, hastened to open the velvet-covered door which led to the Count's cabinet, while a third followed me with a large billet under his arm (according to the old custom, which for every distinguished visitor puts another billet on the fire). The master of the house received me in the most affectionate manner; I embraced him with all my heart, and then we came to the chapter of reproaches, which he finished by saying that we ought to know how to love our friends even in their prosperity; a precept very easily practised, if all men *smitten* with prosperity conducted themselves with as much propriety as my illustrious fellow citizen. It is neither connected with my subject, nor is it my intention to discuss this delicate question at present; I revert to the reception which I had met in the hall, the ill humour occasioned by which had

not been dissipated by that which succeeded it in the anti-chamber. I mentioned it to the Count: he took up the matter much too seriously, and wished to discharge all those who had given me any cause of complaint. I succeeded, however, in appeasing him, by making him observe, that to consider it as a crime in servants to be deficient in respect and attention towards a man who had neither exterior nor title to recommend him, would be to require more from valets than was common from their masters, and I concluded by asking pardon for their insolence for the sake of the *bon ton*.

After a laugh at the *bon ton* of lacqueys, we were however fain to agree that the anti-chamber had also its rules and ceremonies, and that more were not to be met with, even in Paris, except in a very small number of houses. I mentioned, among other inconveniences which I daily witnessed, the custom which permitted livery servants to enter the saloons, the duties of which ought to be solely performed by valets-de-

chambre; of getting up to sit in style behind the carriage, without bags, and sometimes even in boots; of not rising in the anti-chamber, when visitors came in or walked through them; of announcing the service of company, *(que l'on est servi)* in many great houses to the master, and not as it ought to be done, to the mistress of the house; and of a thousand other irregularities, more or less offensive, from all of which M. A . . . . ., and I came to the conclusion, that we were on the eve of relapsing into an age of barbarism.

On leaving the hotel de ——— I had to complain of an excess of civility on the part of the attendants, which was to me still more odious and intolerable than the opposite extreme. The whole household were on their legs; two valets-de-chambre helped me on with my great coat; the lacqueys waited upon me to the very bottom of the staircase, opening all the doors as we went on; orders had been given—the carriage waited under the Peristyle; the

footmen threw open the door; the Swiss,* in his leathern belt and hat in hand, stupified himself with the number of low bows with which he saluted me; and I exclaimed with Juvenal, while I cast a look upon all these gentry,

Maxima quæque domus servis est plena superbis.

DETACHED OBSERVATIONS.

Our ladies having borrowed a part of their dress from the queens of the house of Medicis, even in our days give themselves up to some of their usages. It is known that the mother of Charles IX. called a famous astronomer to her court, whose advice and predictions had it is probable no inconsiderable influence upon the conduct of this superstitious queen. This custom was also introduced at the court of Henry

* The porter, alias "keeper."

IV. and Mary de Medicis had the cards drawn at least once a month by the intriguing and unfortunate Galigai. In our time, Fabre d'Eglantine intending to expose this miserable absurdity has only made it the fashion. There lives in Paris a modern Sybille, whose character and means of existence are solely built upon the childish credulity of women of the higher order in society, and upon the curiosity of persons who, like ourselves, have been desirous of ascertaining exactly the quantity of impudence and folly requisite for the establishment of such an imposture in a great city, at the commencement of the 19th century. It is neither in the grove of Dodona, nor under the mysterious vaults of a temple, that the Pythoness dwells; her abode is in the centre of Paris, in the Rue de Tournon, at the enigmatical sign of the *office for general correspondence* (Bureau de correspondance générale). The reader turns from our page in terror, fancying no doubt that this correspondence is carried on with Satan,

Moloch, Asmodeus, or Belphegor; we beg of them to be composed; the Parisian sorceress corresponds only with ladies, with gentlemen so replete with the spirit of gallantry as even to imitate their weakness, and, more than all the rest, with coachmen, lacqueys, and chambermaids. It is not so easy as might be imagined to obtain admission into her presence; above twenty equipages, each more splendid than the other, obstruct the avenues of the temple; and though she must know to whom she speaks, from her magical powers of information, it is a still more certain way to take a few hours beforehand to reconnoitre and gather intelligence. It is not therefore customary to obtain the honour of an audience till you pay your second visit. A footman introduces you to a saloon superbly decorated, and precisely at the appointed hour the enchantress appears, and the charm begins. What a moment! the past, the present, and the future are about to be placed before your eyes, by means of a simple game at

cards. It is but the truth however to state, that these cards are much larger than those in common use, and are chequered on the back with hieroglyphics. The magician shuffles them, muttering to herself in a manner the most edifying, and then packs them according to the learned combinations of the *Etteilla:* a little after, when the secret agents have done their business properly, you learn that you are young or old, married or single; that you have spent a troublesome youth, &c.; but taking all in all, as the past is of small importance, that portion of your fate is slid over very lightly. As for the future, that is another sort of thing: they conceal nothing of it from you, especially if you resort to *the grand game,* which costs a Louis. We were ourselves content with the *little;* and what could you wish to know for six francs? For this much, have we learnt *that it will not be long before we are married, that we shall have a family of children, that we shall not be able to rear them all, that we shall encoun-*

ter cruel losses, but that we shall acquire an immense fortune. When we remarked to the lady that these prophecies, the last excepted, had all been realized for more than ten years, she threw the blame upon the errors of the *little game*, which was not infallible with respect to the future. We did not however think it worth while at this period to be told more, and having meditated upon this prediction, and upon the favourite formulæ of the prophetess, "you *understand me well*, you *conceive*," we quitted her abode, convinced with Aly, that

> **Les esprits dont on nous fait peur**
> **Sont ces meilleures gens du monde.**

No. VII.—7th Dec. 1811.

THE LOTTERY.

Il ne devrait pas y avoir d'effort, là où il n'y a pas d'espérance raisonnable.

There should be no endeavour where there is no reasonable hope.

Roscommon.

I know a frequenter of the *comedie Française*, and of all the saloons in Paris, who, at the risk of compromising himself by his audacity, loudly asserts that he *discovers talent in Racine!*—In vain is it attempted politely to let him understand that such an assertion must be thought foolish: he takes all that is said about his manner of pronouncing this *dictum*, as meant for a refutation of the fact, and never fails, obstinately, to revert to this conclusion: *It is in vain for you to argue; this Racine has talent.*—

Ought I to be accused of equally ridiculous extravagance, if I repeat with as much sincerity that mythology is a fine invention:

Que les Athéniens étaient un peuple aimable,
Que leur esprit m'enchante, & que leur fictions
Me font aimer le vrai sous les traits de la Fable.

That Athens held a polish'd race,
Enchanting from their wit and grace;
Whose fictions ev'n, the mind can move
Truth under Fable's garb to love.

I recollect that in my early years, next to *Robinson Crusoe*, my favourite book was that of the Abbé Banier in which he exposes,—in which he explains those ingenious emblems, by means of which the ancients as it were imparted a soul to every being, and a body to every thought.—These college-recollections recurred to my imagination some days ago, while examining a very pretty design by Gravelot, representing Fortune, with all the charm of the attributes which the medals of Adrian, Commodus and Antoninus, ascribe to that goddess.—Very different from these charming allegories are

the insipid witticisms presented to us on the counters of the greater number of our houses of play, on which we see as an emblem a *swan*, and as a motto—*Sit fortunæ signum!* How pitiful!—Perhaps it may be objected to me that those gentlemen who are bankers in the gaming houses are by no means obliged to have as much wit and imagination as Homer, Hesiod, or Ovid; but they might at least have the good sense of that farmer-general who bought ready made,

"L'amour qu'il ne pourrait pas faire."

The love he could no longer make.

It is droll that these reflections upon Fortune should have come into my mind on the very day that it has been my lot to witness one of her most surprising caprices.—This little private adventure makes part of a general picture;—it may amuse my readers; I shall relate it, begging them not to search for the moral in the result.

I happen to have a domestic, gifted, among other qualities, with such rare

punctuality, that in time of need, he might serve at sea as a chronometer to ascertain the longitude.—He is in the habit of entering my room every morning, exactly at seven o'clock, to light my fire.—On Tuesday last he did not come till half-past seven; I concluded that something extraordinary had happened—it will be seen I was not deceived.

I beg permission to assume for a moment the form of dialogue, that I may give our conversation with all its spirit. "You are late Paul: what has happened?"—"Happened! I have for half an hour been considering how to tell you, Sir."——"What?" "That I am about to quit you."—"And why?" "Because I am going to marry the fruit woman hard by."—"But neither of you have any thing?" "Pardon me, Sir—we have put into the Lottery."—"That is one chance more than *Jeanot*, who hoped to gain by not putting into it at all; but still this is not what can be called a fortune realized." "Sir, you would be very right if

our neighbour, after eating a hare-ragoo with me, had not dreamt of *wolves and dirty water;* circumstances which infallibly point out that No. 3, 6, and 1, upon which we have laid out thrice the sum of six francs, will be drawn prizes. This sum, according to the calculations of the receiver of duties, ought to produce us 33,000 francs, one-half of which forms the dower of my wife, and the other half my patrimony. Each of us contributes five or six thousand francs to purchase the small stock of a confectioner, which we have in view, and perhaps, Sir, you may be disposed to assist us in getting custom, by speaking a word or two in your *bulletin* about my abilities in making ices."—I here interrupted the fellow to tell him the story of the *country girl and her milk pail;* but while he jested on the foolish hopes of the milk-maid, who constructed her fortune on so slender a foundation, it never occurred to him that I was raising a doubt as to the fate of the three tickets, not only announced by the dream of the *wolves and dirty water*,

but confirmed by meeting on his way to the lottery-office, a hackney coach numbered 613, in which he found the numbers 3, 6, and 1.—I wished to convince the poor lad that he was the dupe of the most absurd prejudice; I assured him that all medical men (except Doctor Pedro Rezi, physician of the island of Barataria, of which Sancho was governor) would declare to him that the flesh of a hare had no prophetic virtue; that there was nothing in common, at least in the sense which he understood it, between wolves, dirty water, and the lottery;—I could not even make him comprehend that it would be better to defer till after the drawing of the lottery those purchases and preparations which were proceeding on the supposed certainty of the prize. His confidence appeared so firmly established, I had so little at the instant to reply to the answer which he made to my objection, "Master will see if I do not gain," that, despairing of recalling him to reason, I sought to amuse myself with his folly.—

The following day was that fixed for the drawing of the lottery; I promised to be present.—To give my curiosity an occasion, and not a greater interest, I entered by the *private* door, into one of the lottery-offices in the street of Faubourg Mont-martre, at the sign of the *cornu-copia*; two young girls were employed in decorating it with bunches of roses and garlands of oak leaves: *three Clarinets*, and the *Great Chest* of the section were drinking in a corner, to the account of the produce of the show, while a tall boy, of clever appearance, decorated with the garlands of these damsels, the picture frame destined to contain the statement of the sums gained, and of the Numbers of the tickets drawn.

After having taken and paid by a *petit-ecu* for a *billet ready made*, the validity of which was warranted to me by one of the girls, who chose it for me herself, I took my way towards the street *Neuve-des-Petits-Champs*, reflecting that every state has its peculiar charlatanism.—The crowd

announced to me that I was near the temple of Fortune. An ill-natured moralist would not have failed to deduce some fine oratorical notions from the position of this temple, close by a common sewer;—but for my part, I recollected the fine lines of Horace upon the goddess of Antium, and I muttered—

O Diva gratum quæ regis Antium,
Præsens vel imo tollere de gradu
Mortale corpus, vel superbos
Vertere funeribus triumphos.

At the bottom of a narrow alley, I entered a rather spacious court, one of the sides of which presented a great pediment, as the finishing of a large gate in the antique style.—The centre part of the pediment enclosed a frame-work, destined to exhibit the numbers that were drawn, for the purpose of their being proclaimed in the hall: in front of this gate a crowd of commissioners were assembled, to copy the lists which they hawk about in the streets, before the offices can communicate them officially.

Having with much difficulty reached the great room, I perceived my servant at the other end of it; but it was quite impossible for me to penetrate to him. To make the best of my position, while waiting for the ceremony, I could do no better than listen to the conversations near me: the subject of the whole of them was the cause that had induced each of my neighbours to try his luck. He on my right hand was, as he told me, an honest hosier in Bear-street, who had for two years adventured in the lottery, with the intention of employing his prizes in the establishment of a *magasin de Noveautes* in the Rue *Vivienne*. On my left was a young and handsome linen-weaver, who founded upon his chance the hope of being able to establish a fashionable shop under the *galleries des Bois* in the Palais Royal. A few paces further off, a tall thin man, who from his appearance I should have known to be a gambler by profession, complained of having deranged a *martingale* which brought him a *louis* per day, to follow 77, which counts

118 drawings of *vieillesse*. He talked so rapidly of *series* and *intermittences* that it was impossible for me to ascertain the reason why a fat woman before me was on the point of pulling caps with a female near her, when all at once a signal announced the moment of drawing, and bade the tumult cease.

Two servants in livery opened a door which covered a kind of theatre:—it was there that the oracles of chance were placed. A child clothed in blue, with a red girdle, blindfolded, and of an appearance quite mythological, was mounted upon a table beside an enormous wheel of fortune, ornamented with glass between the spokes: he drew successively the ninety numbers; unfolded one after the other, called with a loud voice, held them up to the view of the public, and closed them up again in a pasteboard case, of the same form and

* A Martingale is a cant phrase in gaming, for risking at one stake the whole amount of preceding losses. Some of the other slang expressions of this worthy are unsusceptible of translation.

weight, when they were again thrown by another child into a wheel resembling the former. These preliminaries completed, the drawing began, and the most absolute silence all at once pervaded the tumultuous assembly. The five successful numbers were drawn one after the other, and repeated at the same instant, and as if by magic, in a *bas relief* at the other end of the hall. Each annunciation excited a murmur in which two parties were distinguished, like the chorus of an opera;—that of hope disappointed in the chromatic style, and that of hope realized in a lively and brilliant tone. It is here that an artist should come to study nature, to observe all the movements, all the expressions of which the human countenance is susceptible. Among so many countenances discomposed by sorrow, I was exceedingly curious to examine that of my ambitious valet. I had not paid much attention to the numbers drawn: when judge my surprise to see my man, naturally very dull and very serious, his face now beaming with joy, capering

like a madman, with a little round woman hanging on his arm! By one of those chances that disconcert all the rules of prudence, all the reasonings of wisdom, he had gained his *terne*,* and made his fortune. I was still in the humour for giving him a sermon; but he was not in the humour for listening. I contented myself with congratulating him on being more lucky than wise. He was followed with acclamations to the street, the cavalcade attended him to the door of his bride, at whose house he on the same evening gave a supper, where, as may readily be believed, hare ragoo was not forgotten. Paul is an honest fellow: his good fortune rejoices me; but I could have wished that he had owed it to other circumstances.

* The terne in the French lottery gives the highest prize, and is determined by the consecutive drawing of three chosen numbers.

No. VIII.—10th Dec. 1811.

DETACHED OBSERVATIONS.*

THE BOULEVARTS.

If certain reformers were listened to Paris would soon be submitted to regulations as severe as those of the Order of La Trappe. Some wish carriages to be prohibited, to the effect that people who walk may do so with greater comfort; others wish that horses should not be allowed to go quicker than at a walking pace; these

* These follow another paper, occupied with indifferent correspondence, which are omitted, as uninteresting to the English reader.

Translator.

would have the streets transformed into canals; those again complain that the fountains flow day and night. Some persons, probably from having had their chins scratched by a racket, break forth against the players at shuttlecock before doors, and they even go the length of a declaration of war against those little troops of ballad singers and jugglers that enliven the *boulevarts* from the Temple of Glory all the way to the Arsenal, under the pretext that they obstruct people on business—that they favour the designs of pick-pockets, and the projects of some nocturnal beauties. But can such slight inconveniences, in so great a city, counterbalance the advantages afforded by these spectacles to the thousands of people belonging to the lower classes of society, at an expence so small, and as a relaxation in the evening from their hard work? We will not dissemble the pleasure which we ourselves receive from slipping about among the curious groups, that gather round these operators, of whom one

offers you an *incomparable dentifrice;* another a *scouring stone* which would restore the linen *envelope* of an Egyptian mummy to its original colour; a third, a *pomatum* by means of which hair may be made to grow in the twinkling of an eye,—*the whole to be had for the trifling sum of a couple of sous.* How is it possible to pass without notice these rivals of Beaumé and Klaproth established for some days on the boulevart *Poisonniere?*

It is with the simple apparatus of a table, a bottle and some glasses, that this first-rate chemist demonstrates the properties of acids, and by means of a solution of tournesol and a little vinegar, pours out from the same phial a liquor which assumes in succession the colour of wine, beer, cyder, and brandy. At the distance of a few paces may be seen those two little girls who earn their subsistence by the facility which they have acquired of whirling each other round for a whole hour with incredible velocity. Further on is a whole family, from the

grandfather to the infant just taken from the cradle, who execute upon the faded remains of a *Bergame* carpet, feats of *tumbling*, which amuse while they make us shudder. Join to these ballad singers the Barbary organ, to which is sung the romance of the *flower gardener*—the physician who demonstrates the properties of the Leyden phial—the buffoon who chaunts the *Bourbonnaise*;—the temples of *Pestum* in shabby earthenware;—the ship *Majestic* in coloured glass;—mountebanks, puppets, the bustle of four theatres, and one hundred and eight coffee houses lighted up like ball rooms;—one may then have some notion of the spectacle which the boulevarts present, and dissent from the opinion of these cynics who propose to banish so many charming objects, with the design of making a promenade as majestic and as gay as the grand alley of the Luxemburg.

No. IX.—17th Dec. 1811.

THE DAY OF A TICKET PORTER.*

O curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane.
PERS. Sat. I.

Que de soins on prend, que de peine on se donne pour les choses frivoles.

What cares do we encounter, what pains undergo, for frivolous things!

IT is not to the rich alone, that Paris is a land of milk and honey, *(un pays de Cocagne)* but to those also who know how to use the advantages and enjoyments, which this town presents to them, in whatever situation their lot may be cast. Like many others, I too have passed through all the degrees of good and bad fortune, and I am not quite sure, that I have been

* *Commissionaire.* They wear badges like those in London: and abound at the corners of the principal streets.

more happy with sixty thousand livres a year, in a fine hotel of the faubourg Saint Germain, than I have since been in my fourth floor in St. Lazarus-street. I had then, instead of a number of servants, my door-keeper, that lighted my fire, prepared my breakfast, and arranged my room as well as the most clever valet-de-chambre. I had no longer in my retinue, or rather in my pay, two or three very useless servants, who disputed with each other for the honour of attending me in the worst manner; but for fifteen sous I had at my command every morning a little *commissionaire* very intelligent, very neat, and very honest. I had no longer any carriage at my service, but two or three steps from me, I found twenty coaches on the public stand; I the less regretted the loss of my cook, when I remembered that from day-break a hundred tavern-keepers, in all corners of Paris, were engaged not only to prepare my dinner, but to provide for the slightest caprices of my appetite.

I have discovered, in the mediocrity of my fortune (on which I repose with as much voluptuousness as Horace,) an advantage which the turn of my mind and of my taste makes me value very highly: it is that of putting myself, (if I may be allowed the expression) into contact with all classes of society, and of being able to embrace, at one glance, the interval which separates extreme poverty from extreme opulence. I have made it my study, and at the same time my pleasure, to observe the manners, and to sketch a portrait of the present day, and this task imposes upon me the obligation of stopping with equal interest in palaces and in huts; of visiting magazines, shops and stalls; of dining alternately in the saloons of Beauvilliers and the eating house of La Courtille; of spending one evening in the dress boxes of the opera, and the next in the gallery of the Ambigu; of smoking my pipe in the coffee room of the Hameau, after just having taken an ice in the Café de Roi. This variety of manners, languages, habits, com

poses a true moral panorama, which under the hand of a skilful painter would include a proper arrangement of the whole population of Paris.

The whole science of observation, seems to me to reduce itself into two points: to hear what the rich say, and to make the poor speak. Faithful to this maxim, I never omit entering into conversation, whenever an opportunity presents itself, with coachmen, water-carriers, old cloathsmen; all people that have much to tell, because they have seen much. More than once these dialogues have furnished me with a proof that fortune, in distributing places, sometimes commits very gross mistakes. The man that has just now left me is an example of this, and a being who with respect to his language, his character, and his sentiments, one would never expect to encounter at the corner of a street.

This *commissionaire* brought me a letter; I seized it without raising my eyes, and contented myself with saying, that no an-

swer was wanted. Astonished to observe that he did not go, I fancied that he might be deaf, and I repeated with a louder voice, that no answer was wanted. "I hear you very well, Sir," said he smiling, "but I also see that you do not remember me,"—"No friend,"—"Yet I have run many messages for you, when you lived in St. Lazarus-street: it is true that this is a long time ago; I was then only sixteen years old."—"How! is it possible that you are the little boy?"—"who carried your notes without any direction every morning to that pretty lady in St. Florentine-street. Solely by the manner, in which the chambermaid gave the answer into my hands, I knew already if you would pay me my commission doubly."—"You have a good memory, my poor Chambéri!"—"If you want me during the day or the night, Sir, you have only to speak; I am not quite so quick as I was, but perhaps in writing to ladies, you do not require still that I should return with so much

speed." "Ah! no, my boy; all my commissions too, are now of the same price. But let us talk of yourself; you have not changed your situation, I believe, though the opportunity would have been favorable."—"I have always been contented with the present one, I love independence; and to be nobody's servant, I have become that of all the world."—Then your affairs thrive well?" "I live, and I find means, at the end of the year, to have three or four Napoleons d'or saved: but there are bad days: yesterday, for example .... that cursed day! I'll not forget it as long as I live."—"Take a glass of wine and tell me about it." "This is my story of yesterday. At six o'clock in the morning, a little lady of Traversiere-street sent for me; she charged me to go to meet a young gentleman, who was to arrive at Paris in two hours, upon the road from Lyons, and to deliver to him a note of *the greatest importance.* Furnished with my instructions, I post myself at the barrier; I wait, nobody comes; I return to the lady; the house was

all in an uproar; the young man, having arrived by a different road, had been received by the husband in slippers, whom he imagined to be at a great distance, and the explanation between them, was so sharp, that I took good care not to go in to ask for my money.

"I returned to my post; on my way I was stopped to assist a miniature painter, in removing. I mount five pair of stairs in Moon-street;—I agree upon the price, and descend loaded with the whole furniture of the young artist, but at the bottom of the staircase, the wine merchant takes two chairs and a pier glass from me, to pay, as he says, a small bill, that the painter forgot to discharge. The tailor, the butcher, the washer-woman waited in the court; they follow the example of the wine merchant; each seizes some piece of furniture and in the twinkling of an eye, the removal was accomplished. The poor youth, witness of his disaster, bore it with great good humour, and went off laughing with his

box of colours under his arm, to finish the portrait of an actress of the Ambigu, to the payment of which, I have been referred for my wages. When I left him, a young man, that had just stept out of a hired chaise, where he was seated with a little woman of a very droll figure, came to me, delivered to me *a case* in red morocco leather, bought at Garnesson's, and after having taken the number of my badge, desired me to take that box to a Pawn-broker's in the neighbourhood, to borrow sixty francs upon it, and to bring them to him at La Galiote's, in the room No. 15. The money-lender, to whom I addressed myself, after having examined the security, would not lend me more than a dozen of francs; a second was not more generous: I did not accept of a sum so small, and went to la Galiote's to give the young gentleman an account of the small success of my message. The waiter brought the bill for breakfast; it amounted to thirty-two francs; my employer had relied upon

the pawn-broker for discharging it. Deprived of this resource, all was to be confessed to the young lady, who, to escape from la Galiote's, was obliged to leave her shawl as a pledge. This commission did not bring me more than the others.

"I began to become ill-humoured, when a gentleman approached me on the boulevart, asked if I was strong enough to carry twelve thousand francs in crownpieces; I answered in the affirmative, and walked on with him towards the hotel Grange-Batelière, with a firm belief that this job would indemnify me for all the former. We ascend to the rooms of a German baron, who receives us in the most brutal manner; he pretends that we did not honestly gain from him the sum, that we claimed, and finally proposes to give us two hundred louis, *in notes payable in six months*. We were obliged to be contented. He, who had carried me thither, left the room, declaiming 'against the *indelicacy* of gamblers in our days, who do not scruple

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to pay the bills of the baker and the butcher, in preference to the sacred debts of the gaming table, which were formerly cleared in twenty-four hours.' Saying these words, my friend leaves me, and disappears like lightning. I did not lose my time in running after him.

"Night was come; it was very rainy; I left my braces to take an umbrella to attend the walkers, coming out from the theatre des Variétés: before the end of the last piece, a military man committed a young girl of sixteen or seventeen years to my care, desiring me to accompany her to the Rue Grenier-St.-Lazare. She was a very nice little mantua-maker; the poor child accelerated her march as much as she could, asking me at every step what o'clock it was. We arrived at last; she knocks at the entrance of a court; the door opens, and while she is employed in searching her pocket for money, her father who had been waiting for her in the porter's lodge, bursts upon us with an

explosion so terrible, that without thinking of my wages, the door was slapped in my face, and I was left in the street a good deal more distressed at the damsel's mishap, than my own.

"I am not easily discouraged;—it was eleven o'clock—I had a last resource and instantly resorted to it;—with a light in my hand I went to the *rue* Bons-Enfans, to the door of a gaming house, in the hope of being employed by some lucky player, whose generosity would repay me for the whole day.

"About two o'clock in the morning, a stout man appears, wrapped up in a great coat; I asked the usual question:—*Will the gentleman have a light?* 'Come, march on, you rascal!' answered he.—This apostrophe seemed to me, a good omen, (there are so many people insolent in their prosperity!) I took it as an order, and trotted away before this grandee to the end of the *rue Neuve St.-Eustace:* he knocked repeatedly at the door of a furnished lodging; while the porter was rousing

to open the door, I asked fifteen sous for my errand: '*fifteen sous!*' answered the man in a voice like thunder, '*if the* **Passe-dix had left me fifteen sous, I would have spent it on soup, instead of hiring a light.*' Having said this, he shut the door and I return sadly to my abode, thinking, by way of consolation, that days succeed, but do not resemble each other."——"Here is a proof of it," (said I to this brave fellow, putting a Napoleon d'or into his hand) "Come again to see me, my lad, you are honest, gay and witty;—it is only people like you that ought to come to my hermitage in whatever garb they appear;—and this is the reason I see so few people."

DETACHED OBSERVATIONS.

A person who had only one day to spend in Paris, might, without quitting the *Palais Royal* form a tolerably exact idea of the

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* *Passe-dix*, a game of chance, played with three dice.

resources, advantages and inconveniences of this immense capital.—The garden—the galleries—the coffee-houses—the gaming-houses enclosed within the precincts of the Palais, present, at every hour of the day, pictures whose chief merit consists in their variety.—Towards nine in the morning, in fine weather, politicians assemble near the Rotunda, and for the moderate contribution of one sous are made acquainted with the news that are to form the subject of the day's conversation.

At ten o'clock the coffee-house *de Chartres* begins to be filled with men of business who come to breakfast *à la fourchette*, and to wait there till the hour when the office opens. From noon till three o'clock at the *Lemblin* coffee-house, those who are called the frequenters of the Palais Royal assemble, to repair afterwards to the different receptacles of business and pleasure of which this place is composed.—At four o'clock the garden-walks can scarcely contain the crowd of merchants—trading

agents—and courtiers—who, too much squeezed in the Virginia passage, can here more freely regulate the *Amsterdam banco*, the rate of the public funds, and the price of colonial produce.—At five o'clock the seats in the same alleys are partly occupied by those poor devils who are on the watch for the passing of some friend, or some dupe, on whose purse they found their hopes of a dinner.—At seven o'clock those who have been fortunate at play, and foreigners who have dined at *Naudet's* or at the *Freres-Proven-çaux*, come to complete their repast under the Rotunda of the Caveau with ices, liqueurs, or Roman punch.—In the evening the promenade of the garden, if the weather be fine—or the arcades, in case it rains—are reserved for the restless idlers, who have spent the morning in vain exertions to procure admissions to the theatres *gratis*, or for the young country fellows, who are quite surprised at the sudden impression they make on the fair damsels

who people this retreat;—for the inhabitants of the *Marais* or the *Pays-latin* who come on a party of pleasure to eat ices in the Café de *Foi*. Finally from midnight till two o'clock, the Lyonese coffee-house, and that of the Empire, are the resort of a crowd of persons, the majority of whom would hesitate to give an account of the way in which they had spent the day.

After having cast a glance upon the *Palais-Royal* and its frequenters, I shall draw a sketch of the garden of the Tuilleries.—This promenade, the finest and most crowded in Paris, has, like all others, its particular visitors, who succeed each other at different hours. About seven o'clock in the morning, when the gates are opened, it is not uncommon to observe young men who have quarrelled at some public place, enter, two by two, to meet their adversaries at *Godeau's* coffee-house, a proceeding which most commonly ends in a mutual explanation. At ten o'clock, some actors come to study their parts in the

shade of the side walks.—Towards mid-day a swarm of those damsels whose only business is to improve their complexions, disperse themselves in the principal walks, where they seat themselves negligently, with a book in their hands, waiting for the arrival of those new comers, whose conquest they meditate.—At four o'clock, young men in their riding dresses, and belles in neglige's returning from the *Bois de Boulogne,* come to wait for the hour when it is time to repair to the toilette.—At six o'clock the picture changes;—the walks and grass plots are covered with nursery maids and children;—and while the little brats are shouting innocently on the turf, their young *governantes* are listening to the gallant proposals, or amorous advances of the lovers in livery, who accompany them. At seven o'clock, all the politicians of the *Faubourg Saint-Germain,*—the tenants of *Lille-street,*—and old pensioners, assemble on the *Petite-Provence,* where they converse,—clearing their brains with immense

pinches of snuff—about the progress of the Louvre—the length of the bridge of *Jena*—the height of the Seine—the variations of Chevalier's thermometer,—perfectly aware that at nine o'clock their places will be given up to little milliners, who have just then quitted their work rooms to rejoin some lawyer's clerks escaped from their desks.—Ten o'clock strikes, and the beat of drum gives the happy lovers signal to retreat.—Here I have only presented groups;—but what a nice varied picture might be made out of *one single day in the Garden of the Tuilleries*—it would furnish a subject for another LE SAGE!

No. X.—21st Dec. 1811.

THE ALMANACKS.

———Nugis addere pondus.
HOR. EP. XIX.

CONFINED to my easy chair by rheumatism, (which I would have cured, in my youth, with a bowl of punch instead of the pearl barley which my physician now prescribes for me) I had nothing better to do than to turn over the leaves of the new Almanacks which my bookseller had just brought to me.

Casting my eye over the catalogue of novelties which he had left on my table, it was not without astonishment that I counted

sixty-two Almanacks,—the greater part lyrical (*chantans.*) But why so many songs? Great effects suppose great causes;—great products, great wants.—Now how does it happen that the fabricators of couplets increase in the same proportion that the consumption of them diminishes?

For example, we shall have, this season, six or seven thousand new songs (I reckon in this number the contingent of the provincial almanacks); but for whom do these indefatigable song-makers work?—The people in the country ale-houses sing nothing but the old ditties, consecrated from time immemorial to celebrate their pleasures. In saloons nothing is sung now except grand Italian airs, the expression of which is so much the more admirable because no other words are used in them but:—*Dolce amore, mio bene, la mia felicità.*—If, now and then, at the end of a concert, some young ladies still venture to *sigh out* a French romance, it is only out of respect to *Plantade* or *Dominique* their masters,—

and apologising for it to the assembly, which would attach much more value to a *trille* (I would not be listened to if I were now to call it a *cadence*) than the most ingenious or delicate thought. I compare these numerous almanacks of our days, filled with anacreontics—erotics—satirics—and gastronomics, to these vast English magazines in which bales of goods are confusedly piled up for want of a market, and are every day losing their value.

It may be objected, that comparison is not reason—and that these collections must be sold since they are printed, and increase in number every year;—but the great vent for almanacks (the most economical of all Christmas Boxes) does not suppose a demand for the songs, and only proves that it is more easy to produce a collection of lyrical follies than nonsense of any other kind.

It is a fact that there is now less singing, much less than formerly, (taking the word *singing* in its old acceptation) and for this

simple reason, that we are less gay;—and we are less gay because dinners at six o'clock, prolonged till eight, have brought on the suppression of suppers, and must ultimately bring on the ruin of great spectacles, to which several other circumstances concur.—I shall not now encumber myself with a subject which I mean some day thoroughly to discuss, by recalling those *petits soupers* which the good Carmontelle enlivened by his proverbs,—Musson by his wit—and Dugazon by his anecdotes.—I shall recal, with still greater pleasure, those which the elder Collè rendered so delightful by his amorous songs, which *the censor would not permit to pass*, but which jovial company sometimes allowed.—I think I still see him with his black velvet dress, his round wig and his parrot nose, drawing mysteriously from his pocket a manuscript inclosed in a flexible morocco cover, and maliciously choosing one of those pretty songs which ladies could only listen to behind their fans, but which were so

spirited, graceful, and gay, that it was impossible not to excuse their licentiousness. This custom of singing in the evening at table, prevailed among all classes: in our times nothing would appear more ridiculous.

If we except a few mechanics who, while they work, chaunt the romance whose tune they have learned by listening to Barbary organs, and some children who psalmodize to their parents verses taken from *the Parnassus of Sentiment*, there is no longer any singing at Paris but on the 20th of every month, at the *Rocher de Cancale*.

This remark does not prevent me from agreeing to the progress made by our literature—in almanacks.

In my youth, the presents I received every New Year's Day, consisted of *pretty Christmas boxes*, the only ornaments of which were some coarse engravings, and red sheep skin binding.—The inside contained some addresses, two or three fashionable *vaudevilles*, and a calendar

which contained—the *phases of the moon*—and the *ecclesiastical computation*—and the *moveable* feasts.—Still there are different sorts of almanacks, though they are not all equally fit for gifts. For instance, it is usual on the first day of the year that the toilette, the *vide-poche* the *bonheur du jour* of a young lady should be filled with almanacks, but you will not find among them either the *Chansonnier des Variétés*, which common paper and bad printing renders more worthy of figuring in subaltern receptacles:—nor *La Lyre d'Anacréon*, the delight of milliners;—nor *l'Almanach de Famille*, the resource of governesses and tutors;—nor the *Chansonnier des Grâces*, in spite of its title.—The almanacks of good taste which are alone admitted to the honour of the closet are—*le Petit Almanach des Dames*, *l'Almanach dédié aux Demoiselles*, *l'Almanach de la Cour et de la Ville*, *l'Almanach dedie aux Dames*, and ten or twelve others, recommended by similar qualities;—that is to say, the beauty of the engravings, of the

type and of the paper, by the richness of the binding, in which mohair, tabby, and morocco, are displayed in a hundred ways.

But this renown is only short-lived! Scarcely have these proud almanacks shone a few days in the white and perfumed hands of the fair lady to whom they have been presented as a proof of the adoration of her admirers;—scarcely has Twelfth Day arrived when these beautiful little books are abandoned to children, or pass from the saloon to the anti-chamber, where their ornamented leaves and splendid binding still, for a few moments, amuse some lazy footman.

Sic transit gloria mundi.

How much preferable is the less brilliant but more certain existence of the good *Almanach de Gotha*, which for sixty years has peaceably vegetated in Germany; by means of which there is no German baron who cannot in time of need establish his

genealogy with as much authenticity as if he presented a mobiliary chart from the time of Rodolph of Hapsburg! The editor of this Almanack has the means of acquiring a great fortune (I do not pretend to say he makes use of them); as he keeps a register of the age of all the princesses of Europe, it is possible that he may not always record literally the dates of their births, and that he may retrench for the benefit of some high and mighty dames the years lavished upon them by time.

The first and best Almanack is still the *Almanach des Muses*, fallen as it is from its primitive splendour. It is not now adorned with the names of Voltaire, of Gresset, of Colardeau, of Bertin, of Leonard, of Gilbert; but like these inheritors of high birth, who bear in obscurity a name rendered illustrious by their ancestors, and who still enjoy their prerogatives, the *Almanach of the Muses*, such as it is, such as it may become in future, is sure to maintain its station at the end of the year,

as a sequel to the 48 volumes of the collection, and to close its career with honour on the shelves of a library.—Four works of the same kind, have in my opinion, rights to the same privilege;—these are *le Nouvel Almanach des Muses* (sometimes a fortunate rival of the old one) *les Etrennes Lyrique, le Porte-Feuille Français,* and *les Etrennes de la Jeunesse.* There will be found in those some names of good augury, and some productions from the hands of masters.

It would be an injury to the *Caveau Moderne,* even to place it at the head of the collections of songs that are produced every New Year's Day.—This annual compilation does not recommend itself like the others by an imposing exterior: it is covered with simple brown paper; the modest case, of Limages and the characters of Perronneau compose its whole typographic attraction; but several names acknowledged by the Muses are inscribed at the bottom of its pages.

I shall not finish my review of the Almanacks of 1812, without mentioning that of M. Blanchard published for the use of youth.—This respectable bookseller consecrates his magazine exclusively to the instruction and amusement of infancy; which has acquired him the surname of the *Berquin of the Booksellers.*—His whole stock consists of *le Chansonnier du premier âge;* of the *Fablier du second âge;* of the *Plutarque de la jeunesse;* of *Petit la Bruyère;* of the *Morale de l'Enfance;* of the *Corbeille de Fleurs* (which means a collection of compliments for the birth-day of all the papa's and all the mamma's in the French Empire).

It may be concluded from this article that I am very little pleased with the Almanacks of 1812; I find in them however all the elements of a small *chef d'œuvre* of this kind, and I invite all the Booksellers to execute it for 1813, using a process like that employed by Apelles.

Receipt to make a good and beautiful Almanack.

Take from the old *Almanach des Muses, the Epistle to my friend Andrieux,* by M. Ducis; the two *fables* of M. Arnault; the first *elegy* of Madame Babois; *le deguisement* of M. Millevoye, and the sonnet of Mr. Vigée;—from *le nouvel Almanack des Muses, the two Missionaries,* of Chénier; the *Oath of Hannibal,* by M. François de Neufchâteau; *my adieus to life,* by the late Dorauge,—from the Caveau Moderne, the following songs: Hell in good humour, the *grisette* and *coquet,* by M. de Piis, *l'Anglais au Caveau la bonne,* and *la Mauvaise Chanson,* by M. Désauqiers; *Entrer et sortir,* by M. Armand-Gouffé; *l'Amitié des Amans,* by M. Dupaty; *le lit de Repos,* by M. Rougemont; *le Calendrier de l'amour,* by M. Chazet; le *Donneur* de *Conseils* et *Allez-donc,* by M. de Brasier. Let Didot print the poetry, upon satin paper; add the pretty engravings of *l'Al-*

manach dédié aux Demoiselles, the allegorical vignette of the *Almanach des Dames*, the excellent Calendar which is to be found in the *Annuaire*, published by the Board of Longitude, and a few of the charming airs, by Boyeldieu, Dalvimar, and Berton, which conclude the *Chansonnier des Grâces*. Let the whole be bound by Bozerian or Rosa, and take measures to sell the Almanack at a reasonable price, and you need neither dread competition nor imitation.

DETACHED OBSERVATIONS.

There are many people in Paris who know none of the public places in it, except the Français, the Opera, the *Bouffons* and the Comic Opera;—they know that there is a theatre *du Vaudeville*, a picturesque theatre,—others, where melo-drames and pantomimes are exhibited:—but they have no notion of that multitude of popular spectacles which one meets at every step on

the *boulevarts*, or under the galleries of the *Palais-Royal*, of which I have just made the tour.——The first,—in point of antiquity, at least—is that of the *Chinese Ombres* of Sieur Séraphim: a true theatre, which has its actors, its authors, and what is more, its printed pieces, the principal of which is the famous *Pont-Cassè*, enjoying for thirty years the right of amusing, every evening at the same hour, the crowd of nursery maids and children of whom it is the delight.

At the distance of a few paces, under the same gallery in the *Palais Royal*, there has lately been established an *elephant automaton*, which, at the sound of the warlike music, executes with precision diverse movements of body and trunk;—but why deceive the public by announcing an elephant of the natural bulk, when the fact is, that this *automaton* is not half the ordinary size of the quadruped which it represents?

In the passage *de Lorme* (a pretty glass gallery, which establishes an elegant and convenient communication between the

rue St. Honore and that of *Rivoli)* are exhibited the Dutch *Canary birds*, and one is at a loss whether to admire most the obedience of these little animals, or the patience of their instructor.—It is doubtful whether the *Deserter* of Sedaine, or even that of M. Mercier ever inspired so much interest as one of the little Canary birds, condemned to be shot for the same crime, and submitting to its fate with much more heroic courage.

These feathered actors amused me much more than the Neapolitan *Puppi* who chatter a foreign language, and who to a French spectator, have not even the kind of interest that attaches to the puppets that stroll through the streets.

Behold me once more on the Boulevart in the grotto of the *incomprehensible man:* after having swallowed pebbles for some years, he now feeds himself by rods, twenty-eight inches long, which he contrives, without any sleight of hand, to convey quite entire into his stomach.—This experiment would

have astonished me much more, if I had forgot what I saw performed in the East Indies by some jugglers, still more *incomprehensible* than the man of the Boulevarts, as they swallowed a sabre blade two feet long, and an inch and a half broad.

Beside this *rabdophagite* is a menagerie, in which is shown under the name of a female *Orang Outang*, a hideous monkey, the extremities of the *mammæ* of which have been painted *en rose* for the benefit of connoisseurs. One is indemnified for this cheat, by seeing the flying ape.—Nothing can be more astonishing than this little animal, which in address and agility surpasses all the Ravels and Foriosos in the world.

One of the things that pleased me most in my walk, (notwithstanding the emphatic title, which rather offended me, was the *Panorama of the Universe*, by M. Prevost.—The pictures are varied and well chosen, the light distributed with much art, and in general the optical effects, and the

perspective are worthy, in my opinion, even of arresting for some moments, the attention of connoisseurs themselves. Above all, I admired an effect of snow on one of the places of Moscow, in which the illusion was so complete as to leave nothing to be wished for.—In less than an hour, by means of a score of pictures which pass before your eyes, you traverse the four quarters of the globe in the most economical and least fatiguing way; and almost with as much advantage as three fourths and a half of the travellers who take the trouble of visiting these places themselves.

After having gone over the whole earth with PREVOST, CURTIUS can show you the great men who have adorned it, and are now assembled in the saloons of this clever modeller in wax.—The greater number of the busts are perfect, the dresses are rich, and even very exact;—but every thing is visibly sacrificed to the head. The lay figure, destitute of motion and of form,

only marks out the place of the body, the members and the form. We have a still graver reproach to urge against this otherwise very meritorious artist—it is that he has prostituted his talent upon subjects that ought not to find a place in a public exhibition, and which would be more appropriately placed in the closet of a courtesan, or in an anatomical cabinet.

We have terminated our course at the *Café de la Victoire*, where, for the moderate fee of eight sous, for which you are also supplied with a bottle of beer, permission is obtained to view the representation of a piece *en Vaudevilles*, performed by actors worthy of being successors to Cadet-Roussel.

No. XI.—4th JAN. 1812.

A FIRST REPRESENTATION IN OLD TIMES.

Voilà de vos arrêts, Messieurs les gens de Goût!

PIRON, *Metromanie.*

Hoc illis dictum est qui stultitiam nauseant;
Et ut putentur sapere, cœlum vituperant.

PHÆD. Fab. 5.

"There, ye Gentlemen of taste, so much for your judgments."

EVERY one has his hobby-horse, *son califourchon* as the French call it, on which he is mounted, and rides away laughing at the whim of his neighbour. Wits and philosophers themselves are not exempt from their one peculiar fancy which absorbs their faculties, and concentrates in one object all their different lustre. Some ruin themselves in books, these in pictures, those in

specimens of minerals, shells, medals, or stones, and the bibliomanist, the picture fancier, the naturalist, the collector of ancient medals, the Archæologist (I speak only of those who labour under a mania for any particular science, without having a real taste for it,) appear to me to be equally reasonable in their researches: they play with science as they would play at cards, inconsiderately, and in all this there would be nothing ridiculous, were it not for the gravity with which they engage in these pursuits. One of my friends is infatuated with a rage which has not yet spread much abroad, but which he has acquired in his travels with the Albums, Mnemonics, and philosophy of Kant. It is a violent passion for autograph letters. It is well known that the English (always ready to confound that which is only scarce with that which is precious) are very curious in their collections of this kind, they amass them at a very great expense, and intrust them to some eminent engraver, who re-produces

their fac-similes for the amateurs of a lower order, whose whole fortune would scarcely suffice for the purchase of the originals. Last week I paid a visit to my friend, the *Autographomanist*, at the instant that a small billet of Boileau's was brought to him; it contained four lines, in which the writer excused himself from dining on the morrow with Mr. Levasseur. This billet was written in a style the most simple, contained no anecdote, nor any particular fact, and was remarkable only for a mis-spelt word: with all the respect I have for the law-giver of our Parnassus, I could not avoid expressing some little surprise at seeing my friend pay ten louis for a slip of paper, which appeared to me to have no sort of value—"I understand your astonishment," said he, "but when a collection of this sort is to be completed, some sacrifice of cash must be made;" thus speaking he introduced and classed the precious relic which he had just obtained in a case, entitled, "The Age of Louis the Four-

teenth," "you see," continued he, (pointing to a part of his library, where several similar portfolios were arranged in order,) "you see the result of my researches for several years; I have obtained for 60,000 francs, manuscript letters"—"For which," cried I, "the grocer at the corner, the only person to whom all this rubbish could be useful, would not give you two louis."—"Vandal" (exclaimed he, with an indignation moderated by supreme contempt,) "you talk like a man who will leave to posterity nothing to regret nor to care for: see now to what it is that you offer such an insult. Look at *this letter from Montaigne to la Boëtie*, so illegible, that it is not possible to print it; *see this note from Henry the IVth. to the Duchess de Verneuil*; this *sonnet of Malherbes, wholly written by Racan*; this, *a letter from Madame de Maintenon to Father Tellier*; this, *an order from the prince, given the day before the battle of Senef.*"—"Even should I consent to participate in

" your veneration for some few of the relics,
" to which such recollections are attached, I
" should not the less ridicule the care which
" you have taken for the preservation of
" so many other trifling papers which have
" no name, no title to recommend them.
" For example, of what possible value is
" this letter which falls under my notice: it
" is signed by a Marquis D'Hernouville,
" whom nobody ever heard of: it is addressed
" to a Count de Monchevreuil, who is him-
" self only known by some very trifling feats
" of arms, and by having been, if I remem-
" ber right, the preceptor of the Duke de
" Maine."—" You could not have hit upon a more favorable occasion than this to convince yourself how wrong it is to decide on what you do not understand. Take the trouble to read that letter, and then, if you dare, laugh at the great importance in which I hold similar writings." Never, I own, was a triumph more complete than his; after reading the letter, I not only implicitly acknowledged that it deserved a

place in his portfolio, but I begged him instantly to suffer me to take a copy, and make it public. I with much difficulty succeeded, and in exchange for this inestimable favor, I promised to enrich his collection with a fine manuscript letter from Hyder Ally Khan to *Bailli de Suffren*.

The following is the Marquis of Hernouville's letter, which I certify to be in all respects conformable to the original.

"*Paris, Dec.* 30, 1669.

"I take advantage, my dear Count, of a violent cold, which has confined me four days to my chimney corner, to tell you the news of this part of the world. The most important, and that which will give you the greatest pleasure, is that M. de Guise has obtained the king's permission to have a *cushion at the royal Mass*, a favor of which he did not fail to avail himself on Sunday, and between ourselves, with a little too

much ostentation. Mountains and wonders are expected from the Marquis de Martel, who boasts that he will force the Algerines into a peace; for my part, I have not quite so much faith in his prophecies. The Duke de Vermandois has just been appointed Admiral; Madame de la Valliere received this mark of favor with the most easy indifference. I am much of your opinion, this lady has not yet reached her place.

"Has your brother informed you, that we witnessed together, the first performance of Britannicus? Some of Racine's admirers had spoken in such high terms of this piece, that not being able to obtain a box, I sent my servant at ten o'clock to keep me a place. I thought I never should have arrived at the Hotel de Bourgogne; I left my carriage, however, at the entrance of Rue Mauconseil, but had it not been for Chapelle and Mauvilain, who are acquainted with all the actors in Paris, I never should have reached my seat. I beg you will not misunderstand me as to this enthu-

siasm of the public; for as many visited the theatre from malicious motives, as from curiosity. I paid my respects to Madame de Sevigné in her box, where I found the Ladies de Villars, de Coulanges, de la Fayette, escorted by the little Abbe de Villars, and by the critic de Grignan. I leave you to guess whether Britannicus had fair play in this box. Madame de Sevigné said the other day, at Madame de Vilarceau's, that the Racine would go *off like coffee;* this excited much merriment, and all present coincided that the expression was as just, as it was laughable. What I admire above all, is the presumption of this tragic scholar, who endeavours to imitate Roman harangues after the great—the sublime Corneille. Some people's vanity is equal to any thing. I never saw the theatre look more brilliant; so splendid an audience deserved a better piece. Some yawned in the pit, and some slept in the boxes. I will not cite as an example, Vilandry, who snored in that of the Com-

mander de Souvrè: after he dines at that table, (the best in Paris;) he digests his meal at the play *(haciendo la Siesta;)* wakes at the close, and pronounces the piece to be wretched. I cannot conceive what pleasure that brave and intelligent commander can find in the company of a man who never opens his mouth but to eat.

"Despreaux, who was seated near me, was quite enraged at the apathy of the pit: he maintains that this is the finest work of Racine, that the ancients have nothing to equal it, and that Tacitus and Corneille have never written any thing more energetic. He was very near going to loggerheads with Subligny, because in the scene where Nero hides himself behind a curtain to listen to Junie, Subligny could not prevent himself from bursting into a fit of laughter, in which he was joined by the whole house. It is not unlikely that this miserable piece may furnish another "*Foolish Quarrel,*"*

* Folle Querelle, a parody on Andromacha.

with which we may be amused as we were with the former. Ninon and M. le Prince were, with Despreaux, the only persons who disputed the ground inch by inch, but without being able to re-establish the affairs of Britannicus. I am rather curious to know how the little rival of the great Corneille will receive this disgrace, for it is one indeed, and what is the worst of this business is, that there are several verses containing allusions pretty plain and pretty audacious. The King made no comment on this, but when he rose yesterday he countermanded a ballet which was to have been danced at St. Germain. This may spoil our poet's fortune at court; but what indeed can a poet have to do there? Floridor performed divinely; it seemed as though he had determined to make one of the worst parts which he had ever played succeed. I shall not tell you much about the plan of this tragedy: the less that is said about it the better. I was between your brother and the fat

Viscount: nevertheless you may believe me it was bad, decidedly bad, let the *Satirique* say what it will. I agree with it when it affirms "that a work of this importance ought to be listened to patiently, and that it is unjust to pronounce upon a performance in the midst of the clamours of party, and the gossiping of a crowd of ladies, who come merely to display themselves at a first representation." This is all, generally speaking, very true; but is not applicable to the occasion to which I am alluding. For this once Racine has been properly condemned. The denouement of his piece is the most ridiculous I ever saw. Imagine to yourself the conceited Junie about to turn Vestal after the same mode that M^me^. De Sennes would follow to become an Ursuline. Heaven defend me from being a critic! but I have read in Menage that other formalities were necessary, in taking the veil, among the worshippers of Vesta. I had nearly forgotten the most essential part of the story: your *Dessœuillet* played like an an-

gel. I spoke to her about you in her box, but if you will take my advice, you will return quickly to speak to her yourself. She is a girl with whom constancy is only the interval which separates two amours.* If you read *les Nouvelles a la Main* you will find Racine described by a masterly hand. The journal containing the criticisms of his piece has not yet appeared; but if Le Clerc has any conscience, he will amply gratify the resentment of Olonne and Créqui, who have given him two hundred pistoles. Poor Britannicus must pay for Andromacha.*

"Gourville ought to have conveyed to you the perfumes which you require for your pretty cousin.—Martial refused any money: he said he had an account with you. Dubroussin sends his compliments to you. We had an excellent supper with him: there

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* Probably alluding to an Epigram by Racine against M. M. d'Olonne and de Créqui on the tragedy of Andromacha.

wanted but you to complete our pleasure. I was obliged to carry home Chapelle in my carriage: he was dead drunk. In revenge however I left him the next night under the table at the Pine-apple, where he had slept more than once before.

"I will endeavour to go to the levee next Sunday. My uncle is trying to get me to join my regiment, and it is very likely he will succeed; in which case I will see you in my way. I should be much better pleased however if our meeting took place here; but whichever way it may be, believe me I am always proud to count myself among the number of your friends.

"H. . . . ."

No. XII.—18th JAN. 1812.

JOURNAL OF A LADY OF FASHION.

Te tam formosam non pudet esse levem ?
PROPERTIUS. El. 13.

Si belle, n'avez vous pas honte d'etre aussi légère ?

So lovely—are you not ashamed to be so trifling ?

THERE are some foolish things which must not be ridiculed without great circumspection, not only lest we should fall into the very folly we censure, but because they are entrenched in an asylum which must in some measure be violated to come at them: such for example is the practice, at all times too common in Paris, of mingling together things sacred and profane.—Without pretending to any great severity of prin-

ciples, I am galled to hear of popular preachers, of a church all the rage, or of a mass fashionably attended. A mode of expression so very improper, nevertheless marks an epoch in which devotion has seized on all heads (I wish I could add on all hearts); in which the conversation of the most brilliant circles turns only on religious subtleties, and in which the handsomest women both of the court and city make a holiday to hear a sermon delivered by any celebrated preacher. I recollect in my youth hearing Father Brydayne preach at St. Roch. The congregation quarrelled for places, seats were at a crown each, crowds of servants choked up the doors of the church, and lines of coaches obstructed every avenue. I was not only a witness, I was once even a sufferer through the miracles worked by this Christian orator, whose persuasive eloquence determined more than one lady, after hearing his discourses, to forsake her lover, give up her box at the opera, and become a devotee:

merely changing her love, as M^me^. Cornuel calls it. It is most likely the fault of the preachers of the present day, if they cannot atchieve similar conversions; perhaps however they have to encounter passions still more difficult to overcome. There is one above the rest which our church-going dames badly disguise under the cloak of devotion; I mean vanity, the most obstinate disease of the human mind, and that with which, unfortunately, women are generally affected. To partake the holy bread, to bestow alms upon the poor, to hear a sermon, what are these now but so many opportunities to exhibit themselves to the public with grace and eclât. A lady arrives at church just late enough to attract all eyes: she is drest in the most fashionable style: three livery servants disperse the surrounding crowd of plebeians, and clear the way for their mistress: she is followed by several young people whom she is leading into the path of salvation. One of the lacqueys throws an elegant cushion

upon her seat; another from a rich velvet bag presents his mistress a morocco prayer book, fastened with sparkling clasps, on the crimson binding of which are emblazoned her family arms. In a word all the excesses of luxury, all the distinctions which rank and fortune can attain, are displayed at the shrine where humility and prayer alone should be found. After the lapse of a few moments passed in the midst of confusion and wanderings of the mind, she leaves the church before the service is finished, with as much disturbance as she entered. In how much greater esteem, though equally unknown to me, do I view that widow with her modest daughter kneeling on the pavement, in an obscure corner of the chapel. She arrives with the crowd, joins in silence in the divine service, and departs without being observed. Perhaps I am the only one who perceived that she accepted the holy water from an infirm old man who offered it to her, leaving to her daughter the care as well as the pleasure of distributing

the customary charities at the door. But I encroach on the privileges of age by running into reflections foreign to my subject: I return to it to record some circumstances by which it was suggested.

I went a fortnight ago to St. R—— induced by a desire to hear a preacher, who like many others had discovered the secret of maintaining a great reputation with little merit. Tired out with the attention I had bestowed on the two first heads of a discourse, without interest and without eloquence, delivered in a monotonous and drawling voice, I at length fell asleep, and was only awakened by the removal of the seats of my neighbours on their retiring. During my slumber I had dropped a glove, and while searching for it I found under my hand a pocket-book: I picked it up, and looked about me for an owner; but as nobody appeared to claim it, there remained no other way to find its proprietor, than to examine its contents, which I immediately set about. By the elegance of its form, by the

scent of roses: and of vanille which exhaled from it, I directly suspected it had belonged to a lady, and I was convinced of this, when on searching the two little pockets of crimson satin, I found several small billets similar in style, though of different handswriting, a milliner's bill amounting to fifteen hundred francs, and a couple of vellum leaves on which several curious and tasteful observations were written, intermingled with some sentimental quotations in a metaphysical jargon. But that which more particularly excited my curiosity, was a small manuscript written in a pretty lady-like hand, entitled, "CONTINUATION OF MY JOURNAL." I have the less scruple in permitting my readers to partake with me in the pleasure my indiscretion furnished, as the journal is evidently of no consequence, since I cannot discover in it the slightest trace of the person to whom it belongs; and in making it public I afford an opportunity to the author to reclaim her pocket-book, which I have inclosed and deposited at the

office of the Gazette de France, to be returned on application, to its owner.

"*8th January*, 1812.

"Returned at five in the morning from Mme. de B. . . . Had there been a hundred visitors less, her ball would have been charming. My husband wanted me to go away by two o'clock—I laughed at him—to spite me he went home alone. What did he gain by that? Horace escorted me. Mid-day, Victoria enters my room to try on the new *Madras*, which Versepuy has sent me. This turban fits me to admiration. I can't bear the *canezous* of Mme. Rhaimbaud. I shall continue, I think, to use the Spanish cloaks of Mme. Germon.

Victoria, I perceive, is in the Chevalier's interest. She pretends that he called here three times yesterday, and looked for me at all the theatres. I have some reason to complain of him, and for a punish-

ment he shall not see me these two days: besides I have made arrangements to that effect.

I was invited to dine at the Ambassador's to-day but I shall not be caught there again. It was too tiresome the last time. I will have my usual head-ache. My husband must be there. *Mem.* To get Mr. Dulac dismissed: that insolent fellow forgets that to me he owes his steward's place: he refused me a thousand crowns, under the pretext that it was his master's orders. Can he then complain that I get into debt?

I went to sleep again. My husband did not return till two o'clock. I played off some airs upon him to prevent his beginning to scold first. I complained bitterly at not having the new carriage which has been promised me these six months, and I informed him, that from to-morrow I should go to the bath in a cabriolet, like a merchant's wife. He acknowledged the justice of my complaint, and we parted the best friends in the world.

Horace came to breakfast with me: he teized me so, that I dress't to take a riding lesson at Sourdis. I mounted *Zephirine:* I am quite in love with that mare. They sold it me for a hundred and fifty louis. I can soon settle that. My coachman assures me the price is next to nothing. We rode as far as Rincy to try her. I dismounted to play two games at billiards with Horace: he can give me but six points. I strike with double force since Espolard has given me lessons.

At four o'clock we returned to Paris, called upon Noustier to see some new *rags;* nothing pretty. Little M. . . . . of the opera came to make purchases to the amount of a hundred Louis. The commander thought I did not see her. I shall take care to profit by this discovery at the opera ball.

I dined at home with Emily and her dear president. The Colonel dropt in by chance. He is a man whom accident often befriends. All four agreed to make a party

to-morrow for St.——— to hear the Bishop of ———'s sermon *on the vanity of human pleasures*. Has he any thing better to substitute? We shall see!

We wished to go to the play, and knew not which theatre to choose. At the *Bouffons* they performed Le Cantatrici. We stayed the first act. This was the night for my box at the theatre Français, and we called on our return home. The play was *La Gageure*. I remember seeing Molè and Madlle. Contat in this piece. That makes it difficult.

On retiring, I met the Countess of——. She gives a children's fête at her house this evening. To so trifling a thing, she said, she had not dared to send me a written invitation. This means that she forgot me, did not know how to excuse herself. I found there about a hundred and fifty visitors. C—y was the master of the ceremonies. There was a great shew of gaiety, perhaps a little too much: They performed Cassander the Grand Turk. The Aulic Counsellor acted

Cassander; Anatole, the gay Leander; and the fat Major, Columbine. I laughed till I fell back in my chair. After supper we played at Cresp. I was partner with the Colonel. 'Tis inconceivable how much we lost. To pay this debt I shall be obliged to send at least my set of emeralds to Sensier.

Returned at four o'clock, my husband was waiting for me: he had given directions to Victoria to perfume my chamber with the *Pastilles* brought me from Constantinople by Mr. C. . . . I love this odour to a folly. I would write down something of the conversation I had with Emily about the Chevalier; but I am sleepy.

I am in bed, and perceive I have not bolted my door. I have not courage to rise and fasten it.

9th January. I awake with pleasure, having dreamt I should not be obliged to sell my emerald set.

[*Here the journal breaks off.*]

No. XIII.—1st Feb. 1812.

*THE LEARNED LAND.

Genus unde Latinum.

VIRGIL. EN. lib. I.

Berceaû de la nation latine.

The cradle of the Latin nation.

Friday Morning.

IT is not a thing so very easy as may be imagined, to trace from nature, week after week, sketches of our manners, prejudices, or follies. The great models of all ages have been depicted by great masters. Of those of lesser dimensions, and which particularly belong to our own time, some have too much, and others too little light thrown

* *Le pays Latin*, figuratively used for the University, and for those whose manners smack of the schools.

on them, to enable us to take a finished view. Others have not attained their proper places, and others still, which indeed include the greater part, are not worth preserving. The field for ridicule is vast, but it is so obstructed by precautions, distinctions, and considerations, that one can only enter it by leaps and bounds. Besides it is with certain articles for the papers as with the theatre. Their readers wish to find fancied likenesses, with which all the world may recognize; but never like to meet with their own. True descriptions of manners, acute observations, well contrasted events, ancient prejudices, examples of ruin by modern vices; in a word, such pictures as have been handed down to us by Molière and Addison, whose illustrations have not a little confined their successors in the same line.

It is somewhat vexatious at the moment of undertaking a work, to find oneself occupied with nothing but the difficulties which present themselves. Nevertheless this is my case in taking up the pen for the present article, without knowing what subject to pitch

upon. I open my note book; all the hints which I see there for this week's essay appear full of frivolity and foolish gaiety, which does not at all accord with my present state of mind. I must write seriously that I may not write ill. Having relied on my correspondence, I have just turned to it;—after burning some anonymous letters, after reducing to a more natural mode of expression, complaints of infidelity, witticisms without point, criticisms full of gall, and interested eulogies in which I have no wish to be an accomplice, I find I can make use of but two letters;—one of which in the shape of a discussion on the particular character of the age we live in, will require much time in shortening, and the other is of such a nature as not to be published without much reflection. I am there informed of the intention of some ladies of Maubeuge, to pursue me till I have made ample reparation for having dared to say (for I am always obliged to bear the sins of my correspondents) that their first con-

quests were achieved in the time of the Parliament Maupeou.

Such an affair is very fortunate for me; but besides that it does not yet come in an official character, it certainly belongs to the regions of merriment, which I have to-day forsworn: deprived of all other resources therefore, I will this once leave to chance the responsibility of choosing a subject. Some one rings at my bell. Whatever may be the situation or profession of him who now comes, I am determined to make him the subject of this number.

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Friday, at Midnight.

Seneca said happily, it was a foolish rashness to trust to chance:

Cæca est temeritas quæ petit casum ducem.

I always thought that one should now and then let chance prevail. I did so this morning in the difficulty in which I found

myself, and you shall presently see how well I have extricated myself. I have by accident been visited by a very young man called Charles d'Essène, who generally comes to me on Sundays only: He is the son of an old retired officer, who has resided upwards of twenty years in the retirement of La Sologne, in a little farm where he employs himself with superintending the education of his younger children. To complete that of his eldest he determined to send him to Paris under the care of some friends, whom he still cherishes in this capital; I am one of the number. The young man has taken a liking to me: he comes regularly every week, and his frequent visits are doubly agreeable, because they prove that the counsels of old age are not thrown away upon him, and that my lessons do not appear tedious. In our conversation the profit is not all on his side. If I relate to him the stories of past time, with which he was before unacquainted, he reminds me of others of later days, which I had already

forgotten, for the memory of old men is like their sight; they can only see events and objects which are at a distance. I had an interest in making my young student prattle, and during breakfast, I bade him describe, in the most minute manner, the life he leads at Paris. I found in his recital a faithful picture of the manners and customs of that estimable class of young men who are devoted to study, and who silently people a quarter of the city, for which the vicinity of the colleges, the Sorbonne, the Schools of the Ancient University, and several learned societies have obtained the name of "The Learned Land" (Le Pays Latin). I shall be more correct in his narration if I give it in his own words.

"You know," said he, "That my father has many children, and a small fortune; and that the moderate allowance which he remits to me, of 150 francs per month, does not enable me to live like a grand signior. I am intended for the bar. My particular taste leads me to the study of Natural His-

tory. To place myself in a situation where I might at the same time take my degrees, at l'Ecole de Droit, and attend the classes at the Garden of Plants, I found it necessary to husband my time still more than my money. When I came to Paris I hired lodgings in a small apartment which one of my elder college friends had taken the trouble to provide for me in the Hotel, or rather in the Pot-house, which he occupied in the Faubourg *St. Jacques:* for this I pay nine francs a month, which will give you an idea of its magnificence. I do not know whether you are acquainted with the Rue de la Parcheminerie where I live, situated between the Rue de la Harpe and Rue St. Jacques, and that it is only inhabited by parchment makers and bookbinders, without reckoning (besides the House of the Widow Desaint) four nominally furnished hotels, in one of which I am a lodger. It is known by a board of black wood on which is written in red characters the name of the "*Hotel de Berri.*" Figure to yourself a decayed tene-

ment, built during the troubles of the reign of Charles the VIIth. (that is if you believe an inscription cut on the doorcase of the principal entrance), by which you, entering along a dark passage leading to a staircase still more obscure, which you may mount by the help of a thick rope serving at the same time for balustrades, and guide in this labyrinth which mounts to the altitude of the sixth story.

It is there, exactly at ninety-seven steps above the level of the street, that my chamber is situated (the same landing place containing eight similar rooms). It is furnished with a bed of olive green Aumaule Serge, a deal table, a Bergame carpet, two church chairs with new bottoms, a small Dutch stove, which you may heat two days with one faggot cut into four quarters; add to these a water jug and basin of coloured delft, a candlestick and a writing desk, and you will have a complete idea of the furniture of a student of the law. A stout wench, from Picardy, performs the

duties of servant to all the lodgers at the Hotel de Berri. She makes our beds, settles accounts with the washerwoman; she alone takes upon herself the responsibility of our candles and the key of the street-door, which is irrevocably closed at half past nine every evening. It is she also who each morning takes care to purchase the acute angle of a piece of cheese *de Brie* which ordinarily forms our breakfast. You must own that for thirty sous a month, which we each pay to her, one cannot be better or more agreeably served.

Twenty-five students live at this Hotel; it is a species of University; the four professions may be found there. We go out in the morning much about the same time, some to the School of Medicine or to the Hospital, others to the College de France or the Jardin des Plantes, to pursue the different courses prescribed in these establishments. There are six of us who exclusively attend l'Ecole de Droit, and we reckon among us four young theolo-

gians, who regularly assist at the Conferences at St. Sulpice. Can it be disputed, that our quarter has a right to be called Learned, when at the break of day may be seen crowds of scholars hastening to the Lyceums with their books under their arms, and their breakfasts in their hands; young pupils, of the *Polytechnique* School, who leave the hotel for the Military Walk; professors and masters who proceed to the instruction of their various classes; Bibliomanists who overhaul and rummage the contents of all the bookbaskets in the *passage des Jacobins*. Add to this picture, regiments of printer's boys with paper caps on their heads, bookbinders loaded with books to be delivered in the different streets, and you will have an idea of the inhabitants of the *pays Latin*.

My day is divided between my duties and my pleasures. Both in fact are labours. After a lesson from the Roman code explained by the learned Berthelot, I run to the Jardin des Plantes to listen to the

ingenious geological hypotheses of M. Faujas.—To the profound Commentaries of M. Delvincourt, on the Code Napoléon, succeed the eloquent lectures on Comparative Anatomy delivered by M. Cuvier. I find time to attend the discourses of Cotelle and Pigeau, without losing any thing of the demonstrations of Haüy and Desfontaines: I study with equal ardour (I don't say with equal pleasure) Domat and Linneus, Jussieu and Justinian.—You see I make the most of the aphorism of Poor Richard, which you repeat to me so often, "Do you love life? don't waste time then, for life is made of it." Almost all my fellow lodgers employ themselves as usefully.

We meet again to dine in the Rue de Mathurins, at the ancient inn, called the Black Head, near the Sorbonne, in the house of the famous Dr. Cornet, and I believe in the very parlour in which, near 200 years ago, his criticism of the book *On frequent Communion* was seized.—For thirty-six francs a month, we are provided every

day at four o'clock with a moderate repast, seasoned by an appetite more hard to appease than difficult to satisfy.

Our daily recreations are as simple as our occupations. At the library of St. Genevieve our unbending moments are spent; at the Luxembourg we take our walk, and in a little reading room in the place St. Michel (which does not equal that in the Rue de Grammont) we finish our winter evenings. I ought, however, to tell you that the last Sunday in each month is really a festival with us: on that day we dine at fifty sous a head at the famous Restaurateur's Edon (the Beauvilliers of the Faubourg St. Germain) whence we go to the coffee-house *Procope*, and sometimes even, if I must discover all, we don't refuse a pit-ticket to see the first piece at the Odeon.

Here finished the recital of my young student, which I have written down from his dictation. We have passed the day together. I took him to dine with me, and thence we went to the Comedie Française,

to see the "Cit turn'd Gentleman." It was past eleven when I conducted him to his hotel. After taking all the trouble in the world to wake the servant, she declared she would not have opened the door to any other than master Charles, and that within the memory of man, no person had entered at so late an hour into the *Hotel de Berri*.

No. XIV.—29th Feb. 1812.

A FEW PORTRAITS.

Les hommes, la plupart, sont étrangement faits;
Dans la juste nature on ne les voit jamais.

MOLIÈRE, TARTUSE, Acte 2.

THE Romans had certain signs by which they distinguished their lucky from their unlucky days. A crow perched on the top of a house, a fowl that refused to eat, or a stumble at the threshold of the door, was to them a sufficient reason for staying at home on that day. For my own part I am not quite so superstitious; I love better to laugh on a Friday than to weep on a Sunday;—to eat a goood dinner, of which thirteen partake, than a bad one where there are but

twelve: I had rather overset my saltseller at table, than my glass; and, at my time of life, I find it much less inconvenient to cross my knife and fork than my sword. I have nevertheless my little prejudices as well as other people; for example, I firmly believe that the aspect of the whole day depends on the first impression which I receive on awaking. I resemble those persons, who, on rising, put on green spectacles, and see every thing before them of that tint.—This prejudice of mine, if it be one, is fortified by so much observation, that far from endeavouring to conquer it, I make use of it as a guide for my conduct, and second its influence as much as lies in my power. According to this supposition, which I now look upon as a principle, the first visit which I received yesterday morning, put me out of all doubt but that I should in the course of the day have a crowd of originals, of all sorts, pass in review before me, and accordingly I waited

in expectation of them with my pen in my hand.

It was hardly day when the Chevalier de Floricourt gaily entered my room, and awoke me with cries of Tally ho! tally-ho! with which he made my chamber resound. He was in a shooting dress, and came to ask me to accompany him to St. Ouen to meet a party formed for the sports of the field, at his relation's, Madame I———'s. I smoked his old mania. The Chevalier has not fired ten shots since he came into the world. If he were alone upon the earth with partridges, he would be the creature for which one would entertain the greatest apprehensions, and yet notwithstanding this, there has not been a sporting party for these forty years, at which he has not been present. He is a true Count de Soyecourt: he knows by heart "The Sporting Dictionary," and never stirs out, particularly in Paris, without being followed by a greyhound, a lurcher, and a setting dog. At any rate, one would think he took at least

some pleasure in the chase, but he has none beyond that of awaking the sportsmen, assisting in the preparations for departure, presiding, on their return, in the parlour of the Chateau at the distribution of the game, and then hastening back to Paris to relate at the tables of a few friends, the details of a hunting match, in which he had no share. Despairing of success in persuading me to go, he stopped to breakfast with me. I ordered a paté de Chartres to be put before him, which served him as a text for a dissertation on red and grey partridges, on quails, plovers, and woodcocks; after which he took his leave, calling his dogs about him, one of which had been amusing himself with tearing my elbow chair, while the other had strangled the cat of my porteress, who was only appeased by the sight of a five franc piece, with which our sportsman presented her. This gentleman had hardly reached the bottom of the stair-case, when I saw a little chubby man walk, or rather roll into my room with open arms, and from

whose embrace I had much trouble to escape suffocation. "You dont recollect me," he exclaimed (griping my hand, and displaying most ridiculous grimaces.) "It is me—at Madame Lenormand's—where we have laughed so much—Do you go there now?" (I had never been there in my life.) "You always professed an interest for me," (continued he, offering me a pinch of snuff from an enormous gold box.) "I want to make some use of General Dermont: you are his friend, and I have come to ask you to invite us both to dine with you in a family way." After some trouble in recollecting a name for this grotesque being, I remembered a certain *Bloudeau*—a sort of intriguer, making a trade of patronage and patrons, availing himself of the smallest pretext to approach people in power, and who had arrived, from one antichamber to another, at a post which was somewhat less honourable than lucrative. I was just going to point out to him rather angrily, the indiscretion of the thing he asked, but he stopped my mouth in an in-

stant, telling me, he had forestalled my politeness, having just called at Count Dermont's with the invitation, but that our dinner must be postponed till the return of the General, who was to set off to-morrow to preside at an Electoral College in the south of France; and without waiting for an answer, he left me, with an excuse for quitting me so abruptly, but he was obliged to attend the minister's levee; and left with me the hope, or rather the fear of seeing him return to acquaint me with the result of his business.

I was not the sort of person to wait for him, but left home with an intention of going, according to custom, to take a cup of Chocolate, at the *Café de Foi*. Crossing the Palais Royal, I perceived at a distance the great Corvière, the man, who, of all others, understands best how to string together words, which, as Fontenelle says, "are tired of seeing themselves in company;" who talks at intolerable length with the fewest possible ideas; and

who overwhelms you with his persevering stories on the most trifling subjects. Terror seized me at recollecting that he had kept me above a quarter of an hour in the rain the week before, under a gutter in the *Rue Vivienne*, to relate to me the proceedings of a law-suit of Madame Morin's, which I had read in the morning, in every one of the daily papers. He was however more alert to surprise me, than I could be to escape. "Let me tell you some good news," cried he, (stopping up my path with his arms;) "Madame de Sainville is in Paris, her husband has gained the famous suit, which he has been carrying on at Rennes, and at last the Estate of Luçon belongs to them; there is a pond there, as you know, above a league round, and I don't think any place in France can boast of more fish. I know something about it; they have sent me a carp, which weighs seventeen pounds and a-half: I made it the foundation of a charming little dinner, when Dubreuil, Mainville and his wife dined with me,—I very much regretted that you were not amongst us."—I had the good

fortune here to cut him short, by observing, "that I was not acquainted with a single person he had named." He begged pardon for troubling me with things, in which I had no interest, and left me to speak to a lady, to whom most likely he recounted every circumstance of M. De Sainville's law-suit; for passing by, an hour after, I found him in the same place, still discoursing with her. While pursuing my walk, I could not help reflecting a little on this propensity to talking: it appeared to me to be the consequence of the difficulty of acting, and it is perhaps on that account, that old men and women are so particularly addicted to this foible.

As I entered the *Café de Foi*, Counsellor Dujary was going out. "I find you just at the nick of time," said he, reconducting me under the Porticos. "I have "just heard an admirable Tragedy read. "The Academy will be very unjust, if such "a work does not open its doors to the "author. It has the genius of Corneille;

"the style of Racine; the action and pathos "of Voltaire: . . . Apropos, we are going to "have a new Romance from M.——— I "have promised not to mention it, but I "assure you, Le Sage and Fielding have a "rival. . . . Have I told you that the "Abbè De Lille had read his poem *on* "*Conversation* to me. Oh! it is a "jewel. There were but two feeble verses "in it. I made him alter them. . . . . "Come and see me some morning, and "I'll shew you an unpublished Satire "of Cheniers 'Les *Mouches du Coche*.' It "is for truth—for applicability! . . . . . '*Les* "*Mouches du Coche*' literary, above all . . . . "You'll laugh till you cry again. . . . . Is "your friend still on the list for the second "class of the Institute? Bring him to me; "I will introduce him to some of my friends "who are Academicians; seven or eight of "the best votes are not to be despised, "and I will undertake for them; but "upon condition that he keeps him- "self quiet, and publishes no new work;

"good or bad they will do him harm. "I mention it to every body who will "listen to me. In the literary world, one "is only safe between two reputations, "and that asylum is called mediocrity." Having thus said, he quitted me. I laughed at the idea that this *Mouches du Coche** could not recognize himself in the Satire of Chenier, though every feature was exactly pourtrayed.

I ordered a cup of chocolate, at a table where several singers of the Caveau were seated, among whom I recollected a little notary, who always signs his minutes over a pot of coffee, and a physician who writes his prescriptions while playing at dominos. I listened with pleasure to the conversation of the young folks, who debated in a smart style, and now and then struck out a flash of wit.

I quitted them for another table, at which two men were disputing with so

* Fly on the coach-wheel.

much acrimony, as to give reason to fear the event of their quarrel, particularly to those, who like myself, were acquainted with one of the two adversaries. It was the famous Dorsant, the oldest and most determined bully in Europe. I remember in 1785, he had three affairs of honour in the same week. The first with a man who had looked at him askance, the second with an officer who looked him full in the face, and the third with an Englishman, who had passed by without looking at him at all! which caused some one to say that it was impossible to look at this man any way. Dorsant seeing me, begged me to be the mediator, and I arranged the business a little more easily than I could have done in 1785.

Leaving the *Café de Foi*, I took a turn in the Tuileries, where I met the little Chevalier Arboise. He accosted me with the usual question, "where do you dine to day?" "Where you never dine;—with a woman who has but two dishes at table, and

drinks no wine but Orleans." "Laugh as much as you please my sage Hermit, a good table is the greatest of all blessings. The Romans knew this, and a good cook at Rome was worth 400 talents, and as La Motte-le-Vayer very well remarks, such a sum would buy a dozen philosophers like yourself."

Continuing to talk in this manner, the chevalier apprized me, "that he was wavering, undecided between three dinners this day—at a notary's, at a banker's, and at a Canon's. On my observing that it was a fish day, he decided on the last. The death of a receiver general with whom he had dined every Saturday, for ten years, had left him one day free; he begged me to introduce him to Madame de Senars, and as he seemed anxious to complete his week, I promised to do as he desired me, as soon as this lady should have changed her cook, who would not have fetched at Rome, a price greater, than even a philosopher like myself.

At the theatre Français, a new piece was to be performed, but although I hastened there, I could not procure a place in any part. Wanting something to console me, I walked about the lobbies with several others, who had not been more fortunate than myself. Among these was the Nestor of Parnassus, the poet Rodrigue. I recollected him by his large brown coat, by his back more bent by use than by age, by his nose begrimed with snuff, and above all, by his zig-zag walk which defied all possibility of guessing the way he was going. This literary patriarch, known by some valuable works, proves in contradiction to the opinion of Bacon, "that old age brings fewer wrinkles on the mind, than on the face." He was twice crowned at the French Academy, and the close of his career is exempt from care and inquietude. After the piece, I found him behind the scenes, conversing with another old gentleman, who, by his English deportment, his rusty beaver hat, and his large blue great coat,

might have been taken for a Birmingham trader. I had need of a grand effort of memory, to trace in this figure, the remains of the brilliant Count Alègre; of a nobleman so gay, so generous, so celebrated for his follies and his amours. His eyes half shut, his chin resting on a large gold headed cane, he lavished eulogies on Sarrazin, Lekain, and Brizard; and comparing always the recollections of his youth with the observations of his age, he regretted with his cotemporary Rodrigue, the glorious days of the French theatre, that is to say, *their own days.* "Where is Lekain? Where is Préville? Where is Mole?" they exclaimed alternately. I was almost tempted to answer them; "Where is Alègre? Where is Rodrigue?"——

I returned home, revolving in my mind what I had seen in the course of the day, and ready to repeat with I know not what Latin poet:

Humani generis mater, nutrixque profecto
Stultitia est.——

No. XV.—7th March 1812.

ANONYMOUS LETTERS.

Un rapport clandestin n'est pas d'un honnete homme.

GRESSET, LE MECHANT, Acte 5.

To convey an underhand rumour, is not the act of an honest man.

La noirceur masque en vain les poisons qu'elle verse.
Tout se sait tot ou tard, et la verité perce.

IDEM, Acte 3.

In vain base slander's pois'nous sting
Shall seek its baleful form to cover,
For truth, its guilt to light shall bring,
And soon or late each plot discover.

I AM not one of those who are blessed with that flexibility of genius and talent, which leaves to the disposition of the writer who possesses it, the choice of the subject on which he is to treat. The thought which seizes me, the sentiment which rules the moment, is the only one upon which I

can dilate. It would be in vain, therefore, for me, this day, to endeavour to amuse my readers with any observations foreign to the deep indignation which I at present feel. I have now to denounce at the bar of public opinion (since our laws cannot reach it) a crime, whose progress proclaims the last stage of the corruption of manners. It is already plain that I mean those messengers of darkness, those authors of anonymous letters, against whom good men cannot be too much on their guard. Probity was ever one of the distinguishing traits of the French character; our nation preserves even in its vices a sort of frankness, and in glancing at the annals of Europe, ancient and modern, we may remark with pride, that the more atrocious crimes, poisoning and false accusations, have always been less frequent in our native country than in any other. During our civil and religious troubles, during the madness of a most dreadful revolution, honour, (using the word in the strictest sense) had rarely to

blush even at evils where humanity was compelled to groan. How is it then that in the glorious epoch in which we live, in a city the centre of politeness and of all the social virtues, that the seeds of a vice the most odious with which society can be infected, should be nourished, and that examples of an offence which differs only from poisoning in the legal impunity it enjoys, should so increase among us.

I was very far from indulging in such painful reflections last Monday evening, when returning from M. de Senange's, where I had passed a most agreeable day in the midst of a family, whose happiness appeared the more firmly established, because it was founded on the union of every virtue. The father of this house, after having exercised with honour in the parliament of Bourdeaux, an office hereditary in his family, has come to Paris to enjoy a repose suited to his taste, and a considerable fortune which he acquired in our colonies before their late disasters. I do not know a

more delightful spectacle than a numerous family linked together by the ties of blood, of habit, and of friendship. The wish to enjoy this sight, often carries me to the house of M. de Senanges. During my last visit I learned from him that his eldest daughter, the beautiful and modest Amelia, was about to be married. He presented to me his future son-in-law, a young officer distinguished among the brave for his courage, and who promises to ennoble a name already celebrated in our military annals. The agreements had been drawn up, the young folks adored each other, the contract which was to be the guarantee of the most tender union was to take place on the morrow, and as a friend of both families I was invited to be present.

Returned home, I began to compose an Epithalamium on the nuptials of this youthful pair, but, recollecting that Amelia had surnamed me the eternal preacher, the idea struck me of addressing them in a little sermon. To give it

the proper form I turned to read a few pages of Masillon; I opened the book by chance, and lighted upon the following picture of calumny, which I found much more impressive on reading it again the next day.

"The tongue of the slanderer is a devouring fire which consumes everything it touches; which leaves behind in its progress nothing but ruin and desolation; which penetrates even to the bowels of the earth, and seizes upon the most secret things; changes to vile dirt and ashes, which, what but just now, we regarded as most brilliant and precious; which at the very time, when to all appearance it is extinct, bursts forth and rages again with greater violence and danger than ever, and which in the end, blackens all which it has not been able to consume." Reading this lecture communicated insensibly another course to my ideas. I forgot my epithalamium and fell asleep, reflecting on the frightful evils of which calumny has been at all times the cause, without however dreaming that I

should so shortly meet with a new example of its effects.

M. de Senanges had invited me to dinner on the morrow, being the day on which the contract was to be signed. On my arrival I was surprised at the disquietude which reigned in the house. The servants wandered about the rooms with distracted countenances. The bells were in motion in every corner of the mansion. I perceived Dubois, the valet, and enquired the reason of these appearances. "Ah, Sir," said this old servant with tears in his eyes, "I know not what has passed in this house since yesterday evening; it seems as though hell had broken loose. Mr. Charles, our young lady's Intended, is closeted with my master in his cabinet, and my mistress in her chamber with her daughter Miss Amelia, who has fainted three times this morning." Without being announced, I went straight to the cabinet of M. de Senanges: he was walking up and down in great agitation: as soon as he saw me he embraced me, and

without saying a word, shewed me a letter which Charles held open in his hand, and the address of which he regarded with eyes sparkling with rage. I read it:—it was an anonymous letter couched in these terms:

"Sir,—The inviolable attachment which I feel for you, obliges me to give you some information in an affair where your honour and your happiness are equally interested. Mr. Charles d'Hennecourt, on whom you are on the point of bestowing the hand of your daughter, has given a solemn promise of marriage in Germany, which will very soon be brought before the tribunals of this country. In a fortnight you shall receive such written proofs of this as even M. de Hennecourt himself shall not dare to contradict." "'Tis an infamous lie," cried Charles, with a voice altered by passion; "indisputably" said I coolly, "it is a falsehood, who can doubt it?" "That gentleman," (replied the young man with the most touching emotion, pointing to M. de Senanges) "and perhaps Amelia herself."—

"How, my respected friend," said I, taking his hand, "do you put faith in an anonymous letter, do you suffer your repose, your happiness, and that of your family to depend on a clandestine fabrication, dictated either by envy or hatred, and which proves nothing but the wickedness of those who make use of such expedients. Can you put in competition, the word of a man of honour whom you have thought worthy to make one of your family, with the dark accusation of a villanous enemy. Remember my dear Senanges, that there are cases in which the most implicit confidence is necessary, and that a man who once becomes accessible to calumny, places himself for ever at the mercy of the first wretch who may feel it his interest to disturb his peace. I have more than once had occasion to quote to you two admirable lines of Shakespeare— * *

——— Slander lives upon succession,
For ever hous'd where it once gets possession.

Dread lest to day you confirm this"—"But when interests so dear are at stake, is not even the excess of prudence a duty? And these proofs too that are promis'd!" . . . . "A gross deception! which has for its object to produce some scandalous scene, some delay that calumny may employ to circulate in Paris the report of a marriage broken off, to weave some new web of iniquity." By dint of observations and reasoning, I. succeeded in calming the mind of M. de Senanges and the heart of poor Charles. We went to the ladies' apartments, where I had the less trouble to console and convince them, as, after having attentively examined the letter, I undertook to discover and expose the author that very day. Charles and Amelia embraced me together. I had no time to lose. I made M.* and Mme. de Senanges promise that they would suffer nothing of this to appear, that the preparations for the marriage should continue as they had been already ordered, and I left them before dinner (after ten minutes

private conversation with young Hennecourt) carrying with me the mysterious epistle.

I had a suspicion founded on the circumstances, which Charles had in confidence related to me, but it was of proof that I stood in need. Two clues offered themselves to me, the quality of the paper, obviously of English manufacture, and the impression of the seal. The paper must have been bought at Despilly's; I went there immediately and asked for some paper similar to that which I produced. They told me they had none left; I insisted; told them I was so much in want of it that I would even pay six francs a sheet. "Perhaps, Sir, you know Madame de Semæmont," (said the young person of the shop) "we sold the last two quires we had to her some days ago." This name was a glimmering of light to me, I begged the girl to write down for me the information she had verbally given, and then went to one of our most eminent engravers. The impression on the seal of

this letter was neither arms nor crest, but an allegory so curious as inevitably to have left some recollection of it in the mind of the artist, and the high finish of the work might afford a clue to the person who cut it.—Things turned out as I expected, the engraver casting his eyes on the piece before him, recognised the work of one of his fellow artisans, and mentioned his address: and to him I repaired without loss of time. This person informed me that he had engraved the seal six months before, for a lady for whom he was then engraving some visiting cards. He produced to me a proof which served as a model, and I read in so many letters, "Madame de Sennemont." My suspicions were then converted into certainty, I made the engraver give me a regular authentication of what he had told me, and returned to M. de Senanges.

On my way I revolved in my mind all I had heard of Madame de Sennemont, of her conduct since her widowhood, of her intrigues, of her misdeeds, of her known con-

nection with young Hennecourt; and well furnished with proofs both moral and material, I gaily entered the parlour where I found all the company assembled.—A particular constraint appeared visible in all their countenances. The women were whispering together; M. and Mme. de Senanges were speaking low in the chimney-corner; Amelia had tears in her eyes, and Charles with difficulty concealed his chagrin. My entrance was a sort of event, for I could not help expressing my extreme surprise at seeing Madame de Sennemont seated close to Amelia, and lavishing upon her expressions of the most tender friendship. I stopped suddenly. "How you stare at me," said she, forcing a laugh,—"With an astonishment, Madam, which has nothing flattering in it, for you remind me at this moment of the Spanish Surgeon, who waited for passers by at the corner of a street, wounded them with a poniard, and then was one of the first to run to their assistance." This

vigorous apostrophe occasioned a violent sensation in the company; every one began to question me—I felt that a public explanation became indispensible, and after having obtained the consent of the master of the house, I developed the perfidious snare, I shewed the effects, and produced the proofs. Reproach was in every mouth.—Madam de Sennemont did not attempt to justify herself. She rose, smiled with disdain, and in going out darted at me a look of fury, the eloquence of which I could fully appretiate.

The departure of this wicked woman was the signal for confidence and pleasure: relations, friends, the intended bride and bridegroom, all the company loaded me with thanks, and the supper for which I waited with impatience was hastened. It may very well be supposed that I did not lose so fine an opportunity of *preaching*. Calumny!—What a fruitful subject! I took for my text the passage of Masillon, cited

at the commencement of this article, and I finished by this beautiful image from Diderot.

" Calumny vanishes at the death of the obscure man; but at the urn of the illustrious she is eternally busy, raking his ashes with a poniard, even ages after death."

No. XVI.—21st March, 1812.

THE MARRIAGE FEAST.

Point de milieu : l'Hymen et ses liens
Sont les plus grands ou des maux ou des biens.

VOLTAIRE, ENFANT PROD. Acte 2, Sc. 1.

There is no medium; Hymen's bonds, they tell,
Make life to man a heav'n on earth—or hell.

SIR Thomas More, rather severely, compared a man about to be married, to one who put his hand into a sack in the hope of drawing out a single eel from among a hundred vipers. "It is a hundred to one," adds he, "but he will pick out a viper." Another Chancellor of the same country,

(Bacon) maintains a directly contrary opinion, and asserts, "that in this marriage sack, the eels would be in proportion of a hundred, to one of the vipers." For my own part, I am induced to believe that the eels and vipers are there, as every-where else, mingled in nearly an equal proportion, and that you have but to endeavour to make a good choice. Between these chancellors, there is, however, a third philosopher, Lamotte-le-Vayer, who assures us, "that the deep sleep, into which our first father was plunged before he was presented with his wife, is an intimation to us to distrust our sight entirely, and to choose a mate blindfold." Marriage has always had more slanderers than advocates. The comic writers, who, for these three thousand years have made it either *the* foundation or the denoument of their plots, seldom represent it, but in a ludicrous or ridiculous light. The inventors of tales, little histories, and epigrams, are never sparing of their witticisms on the plagues of matrimony. Juvenal and

Boileau have exhausted their most cutting sarcasms on this subject: happily however, all these gentlemen have failed in writing it out of taste. That saffron-coloured robe, with which it has pleased the libertine Ovid to invest the god Hymen; *(croceo velatus amictu)* if it does not continue to be the fashion of the world, is at least a very usual vestment in every polished nation. Every body laughs at the joke; but still they follow the useful rule, and marriage is a work that never ceases. A wife is to a young man a mistress, to the man of riper age a companion, and to the old man a nurse. Marriage has its troubles, and its vexations, but in the end it is the only state, in which we can hope to unite all the sweets of friendship, all the pleasures of sense and reason, and in a word, all the happiness of which the human condition is susceptible. This hope, which it must be owned is not always realised, loses nothing of its credit by the increasing number of its dupes. I never visit the church, but I

hear banns published, I never pass the door of the mayor's office, but I see it covered with notices of marriage, from all which I am led to conclude, that the sacred institution is in no danger of falling into disuse, and that we are still far from that corrupt time, when celibacy shall be esteemed an honour.

I am naturally very much inclined to praise the present times, at the expense of the past, yet I should hesitate before I ventured to affirm, that the marriages of convenience which I have formerly seen solemnized, were less happy than those of inclination, which now take place. It is not very clearly demonstrated to me, that the reasons of parents, nay even their prejudices, are not better guarantees of a happy union, than the passions of young folks, than those sudden preferences, which are too often mistaken for the deeper feelings of the heart. But be this as it may, I shall not attempt to decide a question of so much importance, and until I may be able to produce

in favour of my opinion, a mass of strong evidence, I must suppose that the advantages and the inconveniencies of marriage, remain much the same as they were formerly; that nothing material has happened to work a change, and that my observations only apply to forms.

In older times girls were educated in convents, which they only quitted to marry. It was at the *Parlour Grate*, that the young lady received the first visit of her intended spouse. I yet remember the day on which I accompanied my father and mother to the convent of the Carmelites, to fetch away my eldest sister, who was a few days afterwards to be led to the altar. I think I still see myself at the age of ten years and a half, in a French dress, with a sword by my side, seated in a grave assemblage of the family, to which my sister (adorned in a robe of satin figured with gold flowers, whose precious work unfolded itself in a train of six feet in length,) was introduced. I have not forgotten the little japan box,

in which were enclosed the lace and family jewels specified in the marriage contract. But one circumstance is still more deeply engraven on my mind: that is, the moment when my sister, before setting out for church, threw herself on her knees before my father and mother, and begged their benediction. There was something very moving, very affecting in this patriarchal custom; perhaps it cannot subsist at the same time with that, which permits a girl to thee and thou her mother, (of late too much the custom.) But let us leave these old recollections and see how matters are now managed.

I had observed for several months, the assiduous visits paid by young Léon de Senneterre at the house of M. Dawn, one of the richest and most honourable of our bankers. The young man, whose father had been a friend of mine, had made me half his confidant, so that I was not much surprised, when last Monday I received an

invitation, of which, the first letter was formed of a Cupid with a flambeau, holding in his hand a garland of roses. The envelope contained, according to polite usage, letters from both families, and I was amusing myself with examining the devices, when M. Léon de Senneterre was announced; he came to request my presence at the signature of the contract, and my assistance in the choice and purchase of the nuptial presents. As I had not sufficient reliance on my own taste, I begged to add to our party Madame de L——, who had been formerly of such great service to me on the day, on which I acted the godfather.* We went, and our mission pleased her exceedingly. We entered the carriage and began our shopping. The choice of the dresses was the most important. Our first visit therefore, was to the Repository of Noustier. In a moment, Madame de L—— unrolled two hundred of the rich-

* See page 15.

est pieces and of the newest stuffs; and ten or twelve robes of satin velvet, Berlin net, plain, embroidered, and figured muslins, &c. &c. were speedily chosen.

Leaving Noustier's, we repaired to a famous merchant, who accommodated us with two magnificent fur cloaks, just arrived from Vitinsky.

A Greek from Smyrna sold us four beautiful Cashmire shawls, among which was one, of colours so strange, and pattern so curious, in a word so ugly, that nothing less than the value of the three others was sufficient to pay for it.

The suit of diamonds had been ordered above three months ago at Sensier's; splendour and taste were never carried further. The box alone cost 2000 francs.

In a country, in which the value of a gift is increased by the mode of presenting it, the choice of a marriage basket and *Sultan* was not to be neglected: Teissier was clever, or perhaps fortunate enough to leave nothing to be wished for on this head, even

by Madame de L—— herself. The basket, in form of an ancient altar, was not less remarkable for its elegance, than for its exquisite workmanship. Allegorical designs of the most brilliant fancy, painted on velvet by the most distinguished artists, and surrounded by a border of pearl, ornamented the outside—within, the most precious aromatics exhaled at once, all the perfumes of Arabia.—Robes, diamonds, shawls, lace; all were enclosed in this splendid envelope. The *Sultan* itself, of a plain and simple form, was ornamented with garlands of roses, executed in the finest style in Chenille, and contained gloves, essences, pastilles, some phials of Eau de Ninon, and a few Eastern cosmetics.

On our arrival at the house where all were assembled to witness the signature of the contract, Léon hastened to lay his offering at the feet of the beautiful Victorine. The ladies' curiosity precluded delay in

ransacking the contents of the basket: every thing must be seen and examined piece by piece. The young folks tried on the diamonds; dressed themselves in the shawls, and, now and then a sigh betrayed the little jealousy, which vanity could not fail to excite at the gorgeous display.

M. Dawn ordered the marriage gifts to be taken to his daughter's chamber, and there placed in order: the notary gravely put on his spectacles and began to read his Gothic jargon, of which, happily for her modesty, the young bride understood not a single word: Léon whispers apart, to ask if it was necessary to have eight pages written, to record that their love should be eternal, and that their future fortune, pains and pleasures should be mutual. The reading finished, each party signed; the public officer being a friend of the family, had brought the register with him; the act was enrolled, and Victorine was then saluted as Countess de Senneterre, which title never-

theless, she would not accept until next day, when she should have received the nuptial benediction in the church of St. Roch. The ceremony was short, but impressive; Victorine, after the low mass which finished it, with difficulty concealed behind her prayer book, the emotion which she felt. On leaving the church, while waiting for the carriages, I could not see without a secret pleasure, that she emptied her purse into the poor's box, seeking at the same time to avoid all observation.

Old General Senneterre had insisted that the marriage should be celebrated at his seat, two leagues from Paris. It was noon when we reached that place. The youths of the village had assembled at the entrance of the avenue, and on our alighting, saluted us with a discharge of musketry, and the girls brought nosegays to the new-married couple, who could not reach the parlour where breakfast awaited us,

without receiving the congratulations of the bailiff—the steward—the gardener—the farmers, and all the people belonging to the Chateau.

The guests arrived one after another, and the felicitations occupied the time till the dinner hour, long delayed by an Epithalamium, which, thanks to the ancient preceptor of Léon, had been composed in honour of the occasion; by divers couplets, with which each person came furnished; and by the gaiety of the old general, who finished the entertainment by a sermon to his nephew, of which, I recollect only the last sentence:

"Remember my dear Léon, that in a "year at farthest, we must celebrate "another feast here; and never forget "that the most serious complaint a "woman can have against her husband, is "that with which a Spanish lady made the "tribunals of Madrid resound. *Mi marido* "*es grand musico, buen escrivano, singular* "*contador, salvo que no multiplica.*"

At the sound of violins, the company rose from the table to dance. Julian directed the orchestra. To oblige her father, the bride opened the ball with a minuet, which she danced in a style so graceful, as to reconcile me completely to that generally insipid dance — quadrilles—waltzes, and English country dances succeeded, with so much spirit, and small loss of time, that it was two o'clock in the morning before the departure of the new-married couple was perceived. It was daylight when we separated. The family and their most intimate friends slept at the chateau, and met at dinner the next day. The presence of the bride was anxiously looked for—she appeared, and I immediately recollected the charming verses of Desmahis:

La jeune épouse de la ville,
Tout a-la-fois pâle et vermeille,
Avait encor l'air étonné;
Et tout ensemble heureuse et sage,
Laissait sur son visage
Le Plaisir qu'elle avait donné.

The blushing fair one's changing cheek,
Her downcast eye, and aspect meek,
The various thoughts within betray,
As o'er her face the colours play,
And tell to every friend around,
The joy she gave, the bliss she found.

No. XVII.—24th May, 1812.

THE THREE VISITS.

Singula quæque locum teneant sortita decenter.
HOR. ARS. POET. V. 92.

Place each person and thing in their proper situation.

IN the year 1637, a great-uncle of my grandfather, purchased of an attorney, a house situated in Rue de la Feronnerie, near the charnel house of the Innocents: it was the very house in which Ravaillac had endeavoured to conceal himself seven-and-twenty years before on the fatal 14th of May. My grand-uncle, who had been an officer in the guards, under Louis XIII. ordered the house which

had contained this monster for a few hours to be pulled down, and built two shops on its site. In one he established as a trader the eldest daughter of his nurse, and in the other he placed at the head of a small assortment of grocery, the son of one of his tenants, whom he had the courage to acknowledge as a relation—(and this by the way, was the reason why none of my step-cousins could enter into the chapters of German nobility.) These two establishments have prospered from one generation to another. The first increased progressively, and passed without ostentation from small-wares to lace; and about the middle of the last century, M. Bonnefoi, one of the descendants in the male line from the nurse's daughter, raised the business to a hosier's, and his children now carry on in partnership, on the same spot, one of the best regulated and most frequented shops in the capital, for caps and stockings. The second of these institutions became to its proprietor the source of a fortune still

more brilliant and rapid. From father to son succeeded, a grocer, a collector of taxes, a provision contractor, a farmer general's deputy, a stock-broker, a partner with Paris Duverney; and my relation M. Dervill̀e is at this moment, in the person of his adopted great grandson, one of the richest and most esteemed bankers in Paris. It is a circumstance worthy of remark, that these two families have preserved a sort of hereditary gratitude for me, out of which springs a friendship that I cultivate with pleasure. Twelve or fifteen thousand livres a year, gained by laborious industry in the profession of his forefathers, far from giving birth in the mind of the hosier to an ambition but too common in the world, of changing his habitation and mode of life, have only served to render his home and his habits, to which so many happy recollections are attached, still more dear to him. Our financier resides in a charming mansion in the Rue Cérutti, but he has lately retaken his paternal dwelling, which he has

transformed into a lottery office; the management of which he has confided to a very pretty widow.

It so happened that last week I received three invitations for the same day. The hosier begged me to do him the friendship—the financier to do him the pleasure, and the prince of N——— to do him the honour of passing the evening with him. I did not like to refuse the one; I wished to go to the other, and I could not dispense with the invitation of the third. This triple task appeared at first impossible to fulfil; but on recollecting that the evening of different classes of society is composed of very different hours, and that by making a good use of the opportunity offered me, I might be able to observe various contrasts, and perhaps gather a few new observations, I made arrangements to attend the three engagements.

The hosier, M. Bonnefoi, dines at two o'clock; he has chosen this as a medium between the fashion and his former

habits. At four o'clock, when I arrived, they were taking coffee in a little back parlour, rather dark, (the furniture of faded blue and white Chinese silk) and which served by turns for a counting house, dining parlour, and drawing room. For that day the business of the shop was entrusted to the care of their two clerks; one of whom appeared to possess the confidence of the master of the house. The family of the honest tradesman consisted of M. Bonnefoi the elder, of the heir presumptive to the hosiery business, of Matthew Bonnefoi, who was second clerk at a notary's, and of Miss Victoria Bonnefoi, who had just attained her sixteenth year, and on whom already rested the whole weight of the household affairs. The entire house was under the direction of Madame Bonnefoi, whose activity, knowledge, and, if the whole truth must be spoken, whose despotic sway left little for her husband to do. Two or three male and as many female acquaintances completed the company. My entrance interrupt-

ed a most interesting dissertation on cotton and woollen net-caps, East India silk stockings, and socks of unbleached *Moulins* thread. After a little conversation on subjects of more variety and general interest, such as the scandal of the neighbourhood, the embellishments of Paris, the price of provisions in the market, and the danger of copper stew-pans, Miss Victoria (accompanying herself on a spinnet which bore date anno 1737) sung two or three songs from "l'Epicurien Français," which Mr. Charles, the youngest of the shopmen, had taken care to select for her. After this little concert, the table was covered with a *Bergame* cloth. At one end M. Bonnefoi began a game of drafts with M. Delbeuf a linen draper at the sign of Blue Beard; while at the other the mistress of the house made a party at piquet, with the first singer at St. Eustache, whose long and familiar intimacy at M. Bonnefoi's had now and then given occasion for a little exercise of the tongue of scandal. The rest of the circle gathered round M. Co-

cherel, a post office clerk,* who having twice or thrice performed the journey from Paris to Bourdeaux in the cabriolet of a diligence, thought himself a fit rival for Tavernier and Humboldt. At nine o'clock I left them. As I crossed the shop, I thought I perceived little Charles speaking with some emotion to Miss Victoria, who listened to him attentively with her eyes cast down upon her work. She blushed on seeing me, from modesty more than surprise, and I doubted not but the young shop-boy would one day become the shop-master.

I had gone on foot to M. Bonnefoi's: out of respect to my white silk stockings, I now took a hackney coach for M. Derville's, where I found a company, if not the most brilliant, at least the most amiable in Paris. There might be found wit without arrogance, learning without pedantry, great names without pride, and gaiety without confusion. Mme. Derville was at once the

* Employé émérite des Messageries.

soul and model of this charming society. Her elements were variously composed; but their oppositions were not contrasts. She possessed, in the highest degree, that secret of delicate souls, which Marmontel defines to be the art of reconciling that which we desire with that which is proper for us. Nothing could be finer than her person; nothing more brilliant than her conversation. Her bon-mots are quoted and repeated every-where; and, wonderful to relate, they never give pain to any one.

If we reflect on the state of such society, we must be struck with the idea of the prodigious change wrought by the last century in the manners and customs of the commercial class. *Turcaret* is now nothing more than a fanciful picture, painted by a great master, but to which we should be unable to discover a single resemblance. I only speak with relation to manners and exterior forms; nor do I mean to affirm that the change is really so great or complete as at first glance it appears to be. At eleven

o'clock punch and ices were served, and I chose that moment to depart, informing Madame Derville of the ceremonious visit I had to pay.—" I should not wish," said she laughing, " that you should go to such a house in a hackney coach. My carriage is ready, and at your service. It will not certainly be very conspicuous for its armorial bearings: but nevertheless it will enter the court yard. Servants without liveries are not permitted to pass the first antichamber; but you will find mine, on coming out, ready to give you your great coat, and call up the carriage." I immediately accepted her offer, and returned home to alter my dress. I left my toilette habited in a trimmed velvet suit, which had been made for me in the year 1783; I armed myself with a brilliant handled steel sword, whose rusty blade has become inseparable from its scabbard, and covering my bald front with a hat and feather, drove in this ridiculous dress to l'Hotel de ———. I remarked with more compassion than pride several fine gentle-

men in embroidered clothes, who descended from ignoble hacks at the corner of the street, and crossed the court on tip-toe, seeking to avoid being seen by those whose carriages entered at the same time. I alighted at the foot of the grand staircase, and arrived between two rows of powdered lacqueys of every denomination, at the entrance of the apartments, where a valet opened and closed the folding doors, while a hussar, with the voice of a Stentor, announced the visitors, mangling the foreign names in the most barbarous manner, and pitching the elevation of his voice according to the importance of the title which presented itself. For my own part I glided in almost incognito between a Highness and an Excellency, and with some difficulty penetrated as far as the magnificent saloon, which contained the Princess, surrounded by ladies sparkling with diamonds, who occupied, according to their rank and distinction, places more or less

near to her." The Princess seemed to be weary, and the ladies did not appear much better amused. They eyed one another, whispered aside to those next them, and some criticism or little piece of scandal alone now and then enlivened the listlessness with which they were overwhelmed.

The prince was walking up and down a superb gallery, attended by a few great personages: among whom were generals distinguished by their famous exploits, men celebrated for their genius, and magistrates honoured for their integrity. I knew not in what class to place a little gentleman with a sword by his side, but without a hat or any ornament, who ranged all the apartments with a look of great business, now giving orders to the footmen, now whispering in the prince's ear, and now presenting the ladies to the princess. I learnt that he was a sort of factotum, one of those *respectable* table companions who have just wit enough to regulate the eti-

quette of a great house, and whom the public (generally without reason) think in high favour with its owner.

It was one o'clock when I retired, not quite certain whether I had been perceived, but well satisfied with having fulfilled a duty, and convinced *that the great bestow no attention at their own homes, but upon those who are absent.*

In accounting to myself for my evening, I affirmed with all the good faith I profess, and especially towards myself, that simplicity and cordiality would draw me much oftener to the back parlour of M. Bonnefoi, if the first was not too near a-kin to bad taste, and if to say the truth the impertinences of the lower class of citizens were not more insupportable than all the rest;—that I should think most highly of the gaiety, wit, and ease which reigns in the drawing room of Madame Derville, wishing only a benevolence more extended, principles and morals a little more solid, and

perhaps commerce a little more certain,—and in fine, that all hopes of pleasure must be renounced, where etiquette, ceremony, and restraint bear sway.

No. XVIII.—6th JUNE, 1812.

THE COUNTRY EXCURSION.

A mighty pomp, tho' made of little things.
DRYDEN.

Que cette pompe brillante est composée de petites choses!

THE taste, or rather let me say the mania for the country, has never been so widely diffused as it now is among the Parisians. A rural fever has seized on all classes of society; a person is at this season ashamed to be met in Paris, and only accosts his friend to declare that he has just arrived from, or is just setting out for, the country. The great folks go to drink the waters at Barrèges, at Tæplitz, or at Spa. The rich classes retire to their seats, some leagues from the capital; the good citizens hire a

corner of land at Passy, Chaillot, or Boulogne; and the mechanics pass their Sundays in the meadows of St. Gervais, or the woods of Romainville. It is only among the middling class of citizens, that country jaunts are planned six months beforehand, and to accomplish which, they hoard up, during the winter the produce *du flambeau de la bouillotte à 30 sous,** which, in spite of the fashion, they continue to play every evening in certain houses of *La Cité*, and the faubourg St. Jacques. The choice of the place, the number of the company, the point of rendezvous, the moment of departure, the means of carriage, the species and quality of provisions to be taken, all are weighed, calculated, and discussed, as if it was intended to effect a settlement in New Holland. I have long remarked that pleasure must be caught flying, instead of appointing a place to meet her, and I have seldom found that

* A game at cards.

these projected amusements, so long in preparation, have answered the ideas which were formed of them: among many little adventures of which I have been witness, and which I could adduce as proofs of this truth, I will relate the most recent.

M. Vaucels is an old clerk in the office for foreign affairs, retired to his house in the faubourg St. Jacques, where his fortune enables him to receive the best company of the *Estrapade and Place St. Michel.* He enjoys in his quarter all the consideration due to an excellent reputation and exemplary probity, and the privilege of citing at all times the names of Cardinal de Bernis, and M. de Vergennes, and the Treaty of 56, on the business of which he had the honour of making two journies. The recovery of Madame Vaucels from a serious illness, which had caused her family and friends much inquietude, suggested the idea of a little fête which was deliberated upon through the winter, and the 20th of May fixed as its epoch. The spot pitched

on was the heights of Chaville, at the *Ferme Ornée* of M. Durivage, the son-in-law of M. Vaucels. The motive for the party and the particular esteem I entertain for the family, with whom I have been long connected, made it a kind of duty, that I should attend this company, though I expected very little pleasure from it. I had at first been commissioned by the mistress of the house to arrange the programme of the entertainment, but her husband would not surrender this right, insisting that it belonged to the department for foreign affairs. He, therefore, assigned to every one their employment. M. Crochard, an old attorney, and one of the most skilful epicures of the ancient *Basoche*, was entrusted with purveying the eatables, and M. Franc, a grocer, in the Rue Fossé-St.-Jacques, undertook to hire the vehicles. Our little caravan consisted of seventeen persons, M. and Madame Vaucels; M. Durivage, his wife, and their daughter Emily, who was seventeen years of age

and the prettiest figure in the world; five persons of M. Crochard's family, the most interesting of whom, particularly in the eyes of Emily, was young Augustus Crochard, first clerk in his father's office; M. Franc and his sister Madame Desnoyers, a widow, neither young nor old, but rich enough to assure herself of all the advantages of youth; M. Frimont, a recitor at the Lyceum of Charlemagne and a wit of the *pays Latin*, renowned for his festival couplets, his drinking songs, and his social qualities; and lastly, a cousin of Madame de Vaucels, who was an officer in the Paris Guards; a Miss Binet, an old maid, only daughter of an ancient register in the Tax-office; a physician, and myself. Two hackney coaches, a German gondola, and a *char-a-bancs*, were placed at the disposal of the company, who were to assemble at six in the morning at the *Place Cambrai*. M. Crochard made his appearance at break of day, that he might himself pack up, and deposit in the char-a-

bancs, the package containing a calf's head *du puits-certain*, dressed by the hand of M. Varin himself, the pies, the cold dishes, and two hampers of different sorts of wine: the baskets of the other conveyances were stuffed with coffee and cordials, and all the delicacies of the dessert. Every thing was ready, and not a soul had arrived; eight o'clock struck, and hardly a sufficient number had assembled to fill one carriage. M. Crochard became impatient; the coachmen swore; the more punctual of the party, among whom I was one, began to pass in review the faults and follies of those absent. The servants ran from one house to another to hurry the ladies;—at last they come, but one had forgot her umbrella, another her work-bag, and a third the key of her drawers. We could not, however, permit them to return, and, in an indifferent temper, we mounted the carriages, after having disputed most politely at the door above a quarter of an hour who should give up the front seats.

It was near ten o'clock, and we were just setting off, when we perceived that Madlle. Binet, whom the care of her birds, her gold fish, her three cats, and her spaniel had, without doubt, delayed, was still among the missing. M. Frimont was sent to look for her: they missed each other on the road, and we departed without the recitor, who was appointed to rejoin the carriages at the barriers with his friend the officer, who agreed to stay behind for him.

Without mentioning a multitude of little contrary accidents, which retarded our course through the streets of Paris, I come to a veritable catastrophe. Madame Desnoyers was the only lady in the char-a-bancs, in which I was seated; our evil genius suggested to her the idea of driving a miserable horse, which was harnessed to the frail vehicle. M. Crochard and myself made some observations which were evidently displeasing to her, and to which she replied by overturning us into a small ditch on the road side, opposite the *Chemin*

D'Auteuil. The chief misfortune which ensued from our downfal was the loss of the greater part of our best provisions—the calf's head rolled into the ditch, leaving behind a tract of lobsters and mushrooms; the bottles were dashed in pieces by the shock; and the wine ran in torrents on the ground before the eyes of M. Crochard, whose despair had something in it so comic, that the violent laughter into which it threw me, prevented me for some moments from rising from the earth. With some difficulty we put our carriage to rights, and were the last to arrive at Chaville, where the relation of our disaster filled all the company with dismay,—the ride and the air having created an appetite to which this accident was a terrible baulk. While M. Crochard collected together the remains of the feast, and availed himself of all the resources which the neighbourhood afforded to provide the dinner, M. Durivage had the cruelty to seize myself and two or three other gentlemen of the party,

and compel us to trudge with him all over his farm, and thirty-seven acres of land, of which it consisted, without sparing us even a foot of meadow. The ladies seated in a barn which served for a sort of drawing room, began to complain of the uneasiness of the church chairs, which the overseer's wife had lent them. Young Emily pouted in a corner at Augustus, who had refused to take his place beside her in the gondola, and preferred diverting himself with galloping about on a hack horse. As we returned from our survey, Frimont and the officer who had hoped to overtake the carriages arrived, having walked all the way, and being violently heated, as well in body as in temper. They quarrelled with every thing, and cursed Mad^lle. Binet and her menagerie pretty frequently. Having however exhausted their spleen, the poet Frimont began to think of the verses he had promised on the recovery of Madame de Vaucels, and seated himself on the stump of an old willow tree, lately lopped, (the only

shelter for a quarter of a league round) to endeavour to adapt a few couplets, which he always had in reserve, to present circumstances. During this time the cloth was laid, but a pastoral observation of the physician put into their heads the idea of dining in the open air on a piece of turf hard by, on which indeed the grass was rather thinly spread.—Some remains of the pies, an omelet, a salad mixed up with oil from the farm which smelt most unfortunately, and a few bottles of wine of such a quality, that in comparison with it the wine de Surène might pass for nectar, were carried to this place. Our appetite would have accommodated itself to this frugal repast, but to complete our troubles, a sudden storm of rain descended on our table, as the Harpies did on that of Æneas. Notwithstanding our utmost celerity in carrying the viands to a shelter, even the most hungry of us could not profit by them. Frimont, who had sacrificed his dinner to his glory, was not now willing to lose the fruit. He

sung, to the tune of the *Femme Sensible*, a romance, which met with no success among us. His vanity was piqued, and he revenged it on the vanity of others. Ill humour was fast seizing us all, and to put an end to it, nothing appeared better than to return to Paris. This movement reconciled every body, and all agreed that but for these little accidents the party would have been delightful. Durivage even talked of having his revenge next month, but for myself, satisfied with the proof which I had given of the interest I took in the re-establishment of Madame de Vaucels' health, I determined not to offer a second of the same sort, and resolved for the future to be upon my guard against all *Fermes Ornées*, never to go to country houses but where the masters are there to receive you, where your dinner does not depend on the stumbling of a horse or a shower of rain, where the vanity of the host is tempered by his politeness—in a word to go into the country only for shade, repose, liberty; and

above all where those pretensions and follies which the customs of a city forces one to endure, but which appear insupportable in the country because there we do not expect to meet with them, are forgotten.

No. XIX.—13th JUNE, 1812.

THE NOSEGAY GIRL.

Non semper idem floribus est honos
Vernis.

HOR. Od. 8. Lib. 2.

Les fleurs du printems ne brillent pas toujours.

The flowers of Spring are not always in bloom.

SUCH is the sense of this verse of Horace, which may also be translated in this manner,

"On n'attache pas toujours le même prix aux fleurs."

"We do not always set the same value upon flowers."

I have known the time when the purchase

of a nosegay, was an affair of the highest importance to me: I found in it a source of ideas so pleasing, of promises so flattering, of returns so sweet! I no longer see any thing in it but a gage of friendship, and still oftener but a tribute to convenience. I was an excellent customer to the flower girls, throughout the whole year, now they see me but on certain festivals, among which I reckon more than one day of mourning.

I never was an admirer of the old mode of wearing bouquets on the breast, the least inconvenience of which, was to eclipse, if I may say it, a beautiful bosom, by veiling the half of it under a mass of flowers, collected without taste, and arranged without elegance. These ceremonious nosegays are no longer used, even in full dress, except at the three solemnities, of marriage, of baptism, and of a charity sermon. Gathered flowers are now carried only in the hand; it is the fashion at the

promenade, the theatre, and in a carriage, to carry a bouquet of roses, heliotropes, violets or pinks,—the only flowers whose perfumes are in accord with the nerves of our ladies, which become every day more delicate.

The holyday of St. Claude, led me last Saturday to the flower shop in the passage Feydeau; its mistress is one of my oldest acquaintances: she was only fifteen when I recollect her behind the scenes of the theatre D'Audinot, where she served her apprenticeship with the nosegay woman: little Maria was then as fresh as her flowers. Forty years have "wrought strange alterations" on a human figure. I never see the good Madame Bernard but I discourse with her on times past, and even times present, with which she is better acquainted in many respects, than I am myself. As we were gossipping the other day, I noticed the particular attention which she paid to the composition of a nosegay, according

to a paper which she consulted every minute, and I presumed she was making some botanical hieroglyphic. "In your time and mine," said she, "we never thought of talking by flowers; a hyacinth, a rose, a pink, said nothing, or at the utmost said the same thing: now-a-days, every flower is a letter, a thought, or a sentiment, and such is the eloquence of the language, that in placing this fox-glove by the side of this larkspur, I shall be sure to give a fainting fit to the person, to whom the bouquet is addressed."—I did not think proper to cut short a learned conversation with Madame Bernard, in order to learn of her the origin of a language, which has one great inconveniency attached to it, that of being only capable of being spoken at one season of the year, but chose rather to improve upon the readiness which she shewed to instruct me, questioning her on every person who successively presented themselves at her blooming counter.

The first I saw were three children, uniformly drest, led by a governess, whose care of them resembled the tenderness of a mother. They came to provide themselves with flowers for the *birth-day* of their grandpapa. To each was given a small bouquet of pansies and amaranths; in vain the little urchins cried out for finer flowers, the governess told them "that Monsieur L'Abbè," (possibly their preceptor) "had desired no others might be bought;" I guessed the reason, as I listened to the *compliment* which the eldest muttered in a low voice—I learned from Madame Bernard, that these children were the *sons and grandsons* of M. R—— a notary, and that they belonged to one of those families, which are more numerous in Paris than is generally supposed, where manners and virtues are hereditary, and where patriarchal customs are preserved with religious fidelity, from generation to generation.

A moment after, a spruce lady's maid

stepped up very courteously, and perhaps I observed her grace and gentility with an eye rather too favourable: she was dressed in a close robe of striped muslin, before her an apron with two little pockets of perkale of the most beautiful whiteness and extremely fine. There was a great deal of art and coquetry in the arrangement of her lace bonnet, which, covered with an East Indian handkerchief, composed her headdress, and even in the pretty cotton stockings with open clocks, and black kid shoes which she displayed. The smart soubrette had come to make her daily provision of flowers for her mistress's boudoir. I endeavoured to guess her situation as I listened to the girl's unreserved description to Madame Bernard of "this boudoir, the most beautiful retirement, in which a double curtain of muslin and taffeta admitted a doubtful light, where every thing was sacrificed to the effect or to the convenience of a sofa of sky blue, in the Turkish style, with

black fringe." I hesitated what to think when the girl after heaping into a large basket, roots of roses, pinks, and orange flowers, left the shop, saying with an arch smile, "*the gentleman* will pay you."—

Madame Bernard was about to give me some details of the waiting maid, the lady, and the gentleman, whose credit seemed so well established with her, when we were interrupted by a handsome young man, with rather a melancholy air, who desired a basket of mixed flowers to be brought to him, selected a few, and throwing a piece of money on the counter, quitted the shop. "Every day," (said she, after he was gone, anticipating the question I was about to ask,) "this young man comes here to compose his message; he thinks me a stranger to his language, and does not doubt but he keeps me in ignorance of his intrigue: to day, his nosegay of narcissus, reseda, and anemones, indicates a violent fit of jealousy, and threatens to break off with the lady of

his affections, whom I do not name to you because she is one of my best customers: she will carry her reply this evening on her straw hat in the grand walk of the Thuilleries: it is very likely she will exculpate herself by a tuft of blue bells, unless taking advantage of the expression of the reseda, she should determine at once to break a connexion, which makes neither one nor the other happy."

To this young man succeeded one of those veterans in the annals of gallantry, of whom Potier affords so perfect an imitation at the Théatre des Variétés. This old beau, perserves at fifty-five years of age, the manners, tastes, and habits, which were hardly bearable in him at thirty. He spends, or rather he mis-spends his whole morning at the toilette of several ladies, for whom he executes certain commissions, without troubling himself to guess the motive, which induces them to permit him to make a third with them in their box, or to accept

his arm on leaving the theatre. Madame Bernard was very attentive to him. For him the first violets blow, and the most forward roses are gathered. It is true however, that she makes him pay dearly for his eternal youth.

I was so much occupied with this ancient Lovelace, that I had not paid much attention to a middle aged man of a neat appearance who entered, and left the shop without speaking a word, after paying for a small bouquet of heliotropes, which Mme. Bernard prepared for him unasked. She made me observe him: "look well at him," said she, "he is a unique of his species, not indeed as a painter, though in that he is highly distinguished, but as a husband. It is nearly eleven years since he lost a wife, whom he adored, and from that time, on the 6th of every month, the day on which she died, he never fails to carry to her tomb a nosegay of these flowers, which when living she most admired." I should like to see

proof of this fact, for I can easily believe the excess of sorrow, but not its duration. I have seen people die of grief in a fortnight; I have seen very few who would even weep ten years after as severe a loss.

I was about to quit Madame Bernard, when I saw a young author arrive. He came to order bouquets for two actresses who were to play that evening in his new piece. By his assurance, and the difficulty which he had in finding any thing beautiful enough for these ladies, I easily surmised that he was very well pleased with himself, and had a pretty good opinion of his work. The flower woman, who knew him, laughing, asked him "if she should prepare the nosegays, which are presented by the underlings of the theatre to an author, on the morrow after his success:" he replied modestly, "that nothing was certain, and that his piece like '*the Misanthrope*,' might be condemned at a first representation." The next day's Journals informed me,

that the Chef d'œuvre of this modest author had really met with the fate of that of Moliere. It is to be feared that it will not rise again so victoriously, from its fall.*

* The history of *Corporal Violet* would form a curious episode to this essay. *Tr.*

No. XX.—27th JUNE, 1812.

THE PALAIS-ROYAL.

What an empty thoughtless tribe.

ENGL. MUSES.*

Quelle foule insensée et frivole!

I TAKE another glance at the ancient garden of the Palais-Royal, laid out according to the designs of the Sieur Desgots, nephew of the celebrated Le Notre; these

* Qu. What authority is this? *Tr.*

two similar parterres bordered with clipt trees; this grand basin in the form of a crescent, surrounded by arbours, in the numerous niches of which are placed very indifferent statues, by Guillaume Coustou and de Leremburg; this quincunx of linden trees; this magnificently embowered alley, enclosed on both sides with elm cut into porticos. This beautiful garden where my grand-father has seen the mentor of Louis XIII. walk, enjoying his thoughtful reveries, and meditating with the same gravity, a plan of a campaign and a plan of a tragedy, the siege of Rochelle and a couplet to Marion de Lorme; this garden was in my younger days, frequented by three very distinct classes of people. One of these was composed of speculatists, better known under the appellation of *Gobe-mouches*, who regulated *incognito* the interests of Europe;—the second formed a sort of academy under the trees, in which the merits of *Zaïre* and *Rhadimiste* were discussed scene by scene, and verse by

verse; in which, while they swallowed an ice, they settled the rank of authors in the scale of literature, and in the seats of the Academy;—the third, chiefly made up of men of the world and second-rate authors, was an assemblage at once the most gay and most malignant that the world could produce: there they distributed the commissions of the regiment of La Calotte; there they administered justice in *Vaudevilles* and in epigrams on the follies of the times, the calumniators of the Encyclopedia, the disparagers of Jesuits' bark, and the contemners of inoculation.—All the amateurs of the theatre met, previous to the hour at which the spectacle opened, at the Café de Foy, then the only one in the Palais-Royal; thence they departed in groups for the opera, at that time within the limits of the Palais itself, for the Tuilleries and the Rue Mauconseil, where were situated the Comedie Français and the Italian Comedy; and, when all was over, they returned to the same place to give an

account of the representations which they had witnessed.—

Such was the state of things in the Palais-Royal in 1762, when I departed on a distant voyage. On my return, all was changed. Immense galleries and innumerable shops had superseded the linden tree alleys, and the arboreous porticos; I fancied myself again at the fair of Cairo, or in the great market of Ispahan. People loudly exclaimed against a Prince, who had, they declared, speculated upon the dishonour of his palace, and who lost in the general estimation, more than he gained in revenue. These censures, raised by the proprietors of neighbouring houses, who were not benefited by the alteration, were as unjust as they were ridiculous; and the public clamour excited by this circumstance, perhaps merited that contempt which this Prince too openly manifested, and which he has since so cruelly expiated.

The physiognomy of the frequenters of the Palais-Royal, has changed with the

features of the place itself; it is however a sort of *Camera Obscura*, where we may see all that is going on in the capital; a receptacle in which is mingled all the follies, all the vices, all the absurdities, all the pleasures, and all the miseries of humanity. For many years I have only seen the Palais-Royal when I crossed it, with no other feeling than a repugnance attached to some sorrowful recollections, which forbade my stopping to indulge in contemplation. This ancient antipathy yielded to the desire of fulfilling, to the utmost extent, my task of observation, and I mustered resolution to consecrate a whole day, to visit this grand mart of Europe, and to study the manners of its population.

I went thither on Thursday last, at eight o'clock in the morning, after having made some purchases in the Rue St. Denis. The first contrast which struck me, arose from the bustle in the one quarter, and the perfect tranquillity which, at the same moment, reigned in the other. All the merchants

of the Rue St. Denis had been for a long time at their counters; all the shops of the Palais-Royal, except those for eatables, were still shut. I went and took my seat in a chair beside the Rotunda, where I might for a couple of sous procure a reading of the Journals. It was the day after the performance of a new piece, and many critical persons were disputing upon the subject. Of six daily Journals, two declared that the play was condemned; the other four asserted that it had the most brilliant success: I remarked with an emotion of pain, that the majority of my companions were particularly anxious to peruse the two malevolent papers, and I concluded that *envy* and *hate* rose earlier in the morning, than *justice* and *mercy!*

The garden began to fill with three sorts of people, whom we are almost sure to find together, and who seek to employ, these their time, those their money, and the last their industry. The first are easily known; with an air of listlessness which even makes

others feel fatigued, they drag their steps from alley to gallery, from coffee house to chair, and at last, arrive at the evening, without the capability of giving an account of a single action performed during the day. The second, without being more occupied are nevertheless more busy: they run through all the shops, create phantasies which they denominate wants, and perpetually the dupes of themselves or of others, they always finish, without leaving the Palais-Royal, by finding occasion to empty their purse. The third class is by much the most numerous: the persons who compose it, are readily recognised by their alacrity in preventing your wishes, by their *obsequious* civilities, and by the earnestness with which they inquire of you the *news of the day*, in order to draw from you an insignificant answer, and afford them a pretext for entering into conversation with you to-morrow, and treat you from the familiarity of yesterday as an old acquaintance.

At ten o'clock I entered the Café de Chartres, where I have formerly witnesed quarrels between the *green* cockade and the *white* cockade, the *Montagne* and the *Gironde:* abandoned for a long time to the peaceful players at draughts and dominos, it is nevertheless in high repute with professed epicures. The *Café Hardi* has seen its renown for *kidneys* disappear before the fame for *perriwinkles with mushrooms* of the *Café de Chartres,* where those persons generally breakfast, who intend to dine at the *Rocher de Cancale.* I called for tea; a lusty man, who was placing upon the adjoining table a pullet *a la tartare,* regarded me with a look of pity; ill humour seized upon me; I left the room, and went to the Café Lemblin. This coffee house of modern institution will not be slow in making a noise in the world, if it adheres to the project of making itself the focus of the musical faction, or rather of the anti-musical, who propose to themselves the noble task of decrying a public establish-

ment, which is an honour to France. Already have some of the trusty brethren proclaimed their opinions in favour of the music of M. Belloni, which they never heard, and against the music of M. Catel, which they despair of ever hearing. No harmony, no orchestra, no noise! they cry with all their might; let us have singing.——But, gentlemen, at least melody.——No melody! let us have singing, nothing but singing. How foolish and contemptible a dispute! perhaps a single word might bring it to a termination; but there are so many persons whom it amuses, so many others whom it engages, without taking into account those who live upon it, that it might not be expedient to pronounce that word to shut the mouths of the professors of the *Café Lemblin*.

At noon the Palais-Royal shines in all its splendour; the shops are crowded; the people of business hurry through the alleys; the old men seat themselves in the sun; the idlers lounge under the galleries, occa-

sionally stopping to contemplate the windows of the toy warehouses, or amuse themselves by reading the hand-bills with which the walls are papered.

While diverting myself with the perusal of these bills, I noticed a fine young man with his coat of silk, polished buttons, vest of flame-coloured satin, green fringe, and his small-clothes of yellow kerseymere, enter the shop of a merchant tailor, at the sign of the Golden Arm, whom I had no hesitation in determining to be some honest countryman, who had arrived the preceding day by the passage boat of *Bourbonnais*: he remained for nearly half an hour in this warehouse. Curious to learn what he could be doing, I had the patience to wait for him; when to my great astonishment he issued forth newly clothed from head to foot, and so entirely altered by his fresh *costume*, that he might be remarked for his elegance, in the evening, at the balcony of the opera.

I quitted my countryman, and under the

pretext of changing a glass of my spectacles, went into Haring the optician's, at the same time with a young man whose figure struck me as being very agreeable, if his swagger had not been equally insolent. He made a purchase of a pair of spectacles in silver gilt, an eye-glass in gold, and an opera glass. When asked by the optician the number of the glasses he used, he confessed that his sight was excellent; that he only bought the eye-glass for the sake of suspending it round his neck by a band of plaited hair of a very brilliant colour;* that he only determined to wear spectacles in order not to be under the necessity of seeing all those who saluted him; and that he had no other use for an opera glass, but to have it noticed in the boxes.

On leaving Haring's I stopped with a number of simpletons at the door of Corce-

* The original is couleur tres-*voyante*, a pun not susceptible of translation.

let, the seller of provisions. Two or three maitres d'hotels were chaffering upon the choice of their merchandise, and agreed to relieve the owner of some articles, of which he despaired of ever getting rid. If the probity of this class of persons were not pretty generally known, I should be tempted to suspect that these did not vouch with the bill of Corcelet, for the articles which they presented to their masters.

A few steps further on I observed in a fashionable shop a very pretty female, whose features were not altogether unknown to me. It was not however till after many efforts of memory that I recollected a certain little villager, daughter of an honest farmer in the vicinity of Bayeux, who came to Paris to be a child's maid, and had applied to a lady of my acquaintance. By the display of her finery, the familiarity of her manners, the kind of homage which she received, I guessed that she had not adhered strictly to her first avocation, but had taken a higher flight. I

thought it useless to repeat to a pretty girl with a head-dress *a la greque,* apprentice in a fashionable magazine under the wooden gallery, the lessons of morality which I had bestowed upon a little girl in a kerchief and *bavolet,** the day after her arrival in Paris: but I pledge myself to devote some day to a special essay upon the reflections to which this meeting gave birth.

About four o'clock, the rotunda presented a picture the most interesting and varied. There the merchant of Leipsick encountered the trader of Amsterdam, with whom he had appointed this rendezvous six months before; there met together the happy gamesters, who had not yesterday wherewithal to purchase a dinner, and who were able to day to spend forty francs at the *Frères Provençaux;* there assembled those brothers in arms, the inseparable

* A sort of head-dress, much worn by the country women in France.

companions of glory and pleasure :—those citizens of Marseilles, Bourdeaux, Toulouse, who were betrayed by their southern accent. In the crowd which circled round me, I remarked a young blood who followed a Broker, endeavouring to obtain from him half price for a watch made by Brequet, which a run of luck had enabled him yesterday to buy, and a change of fortune compelled him this day to sell. I listened with great amusement to another who detailed to his companion this example of gross rustic blunder of Montfort-l'Amaury. "He had some purchases to make; he went under the galleries into a warehouse of *novelties*: ten young girls of wonderful charms were ranged about the counter: to every article which he asked for, one of these damsels answered with a laugh—*we don't keep that*, and he left the shop without the power of divining in what they could possibly deal, at a shop where they had not any thing!"

The dinner hour having arrived, I went

to Naudet's, and when I re-descended, for the purpose of continuing my observations, I was not slow in perceiving that those which remained to be made in the Palais-Royal were no longer within the scope of my perceptions, and that there was in a particular corner a party which desired to avail itself of the shadow of evening.

No. XXI.—25th JULY, 1812.

THE INN YARD.

Dum æs exigitur, dum mula ligatur,
Tota abit hora.

HOR. SAT. V. LIB. I.

While we pay, and the horses are harnessed an hour is spent.

On raille les noveau venus :
On s'observe et l'on s'examine ;
Et trente voyageurs, l'un à l'autre inconnus,
Se jugent tour-a-tour, sur l'habit, sur la mine,
Sans se connaitre on se cherche le soir ;
Dès le lendemain on s'oublie,
Et l'on se quitte enfin pour ne plus se revoir ;
C'est le vrai miroir de la vie.

MICHAUD, Poés. Fugit.

MY readers are not obliged to recollect, that on the first of February last, when writing of the Learned Land (*pays Latin*)

I mentioned a young man named Charles d'Essène, whom his relations had recommended to my care during his stay at Paris, to complete his studies, and take his degrees at l'Ecole de Droit; but as he is an *excellent subject,* and as the circumstances of his departure have given occasion to the observations in this day's essay, I shall doubtless be forgiven for bringing him forward a second time.

Our student, calling on me last week, brought a letter from his father which detailed some family affairs requiring the presence of his son at home, and concluded by requesting me to provide for the expenses and arrangements of his journey. —These were soon completed. I settled the young man's accounts at his lodging in the faubourg St. Jacques, and took a place for him in the Diligence, for the Monday following. The coach was to set out at five in the morning, and lest my young scholar should chance to be behind time, I undertook to go myself and awake

him. At four o'clock I was at the Hotel de Berri; Charles was ready, and Louisa (the lusty servant) had just corded his portmanteau. This good girl, loaded with the baggage, accompanied us to the inn in the Rue Notre Dame des Victoires, and quitted us with tears in her eyes, which she wiped every now and then with a checked apron, much distressed at the departure of Charles, and very grateful for the manner in which I rewarded her care.

We had half an hour before us, and I advised my young traveller to make use of it in swallowing a hasty breakfast at the neighbouring coffee-house, which had just opened, and during the interval I amused myself with what was passing around me. Every thing formed a little episode, of which some parts excited so lively an interest, and others were so ludicrous, that their most minute particulars left an impression on my mind. Nobody can imagine how much is to be learnt in the yard of an inn, how many observations are there to

be made, how many incidents take place, how many secrets are discovered. It is there that our novelists and romance writers, instead of confining themselves to the narrow circles of their own imaginations, should go to study nature, and there they would find her, or at least the colours in which to paint her. Whether, after the example of La Bruyère, they would trace striking characters; or, like Duclos, would observe them for the purpose of declaiming against the state of manners; or, in imitation of Le Sage, would employ themselves with the range of pictures of which human life is composed; or whether, like Sterne, they would confine themselves to interior descriptions, whose lively interest results from their truth and nature,—whichever of these pursuits be theirs, in no other place so limited can they find united so great a quantity of materials ready to be wrought up. What crowds of circumstances and of originals! The first person that strikes me is the conductor, less remarkable for his

cap edged with fur, and his way-bill in his hand, than for the air of importance and authority which he exercises towards the postillions and porters. It is worth while to see the little despot walking backwards and forwards in front of his charge, crying out to the smith for a linch-pin, to the farrier for a screw, packing and unpacking portmanteaus and packages on the top or in the basket according to his caprice or interest, and without any attention to the remonstrances of the passengers.

Several Diligences were setting off: standing in the midst of horses harnessing, of travellers coming and going without intermission, of commissioners charged with the mails, of those who arrived swearing, of those who departed crying; one might suppose oneself in a town just taken by assault. The Diligence in which Charles was to mount was just opened; one passenger had entered it, who, by his long mustachios, his green great coat, the clatter of his white grenade buttons, and his Bis-

cayan cap, I discovered to be an officer in a regiment of horse;—he closed the coach-door after him, a young woman re-opened it very deliberately, called him by his name, and asked him to alight in a tone of voice not much unlike that of a command. The air of stupefaction, and quick compliance of the officer, left me no room to doubt but that he had left this lady rather hastily, and that she was now come to demand an account of his flight. To judge by their gestures and the expression of their countenances, the short confabulation which took place aside, passed through all the gradations of anger, spite, compassion, and love, so completely, that five minutes afterwards this new Æneas gave orders to the conductor to place the little package which his Dido had taken care to bring with her on the top of the vehicle, gave up his place to her in the inside, and took the only one which remained in the cabriolet.

On entering the office to pay the remainder of my pupil's fare, I stopped a

moment to observe a young woman who was embracing an elderly man whom I should have taken for her father, except for the cold and unconcerned air with which he received her caresses. A few sentences of their conversation put me in possession of their history. It was an honest haberdasher in the Rue de la Féronnerie, going to St. Malo on business, and upon whom his better half bestowed the more caresses, in consideration of the fact, that during fifty-four years he had never been out of sight of his parish clock, nor had travelled further than Versailles or St. Cloud. She had, therefore, under these circumstances, provided him against all the dangers, but not against all the inconveniences of his journey. He had a brace of horse-pistols in his pocket (which I believe he would have been somewhat embarrassed to have made use of) a sword stick, and a hanger, an umbrella in a green oilskin case, a great coat and a cotton cap, in the month of July; a little basket with two bottles of

wine, some cold roast veal to enable him to avoid dining at the inns on the road, and a wicker bottle of Ratifia to comfort himself in the cold of the morning, formed the rest of his paraphernalia. This respectable citizen took his place in the coach after receiving the parting embrace of his wife, who, sobbing, left him. I should have been half afraid of the consequences of such deep affliction, if my eyes had not assured me that chance had conducted to the door of the inn one of her neighbours, who entreated her to accept his arm to lead her home.

I entered the office again, curious to know the motive which induced a man, whom I had left seated on a parcel, to be so outrageously impatient, swearing at the conductor, and threatening to make him responsible for all the damage which should accrue to him for these five minutes delay. I could not possibly account for the agonies which he seemed to be suffering, but all was presently cleared up by the

arrival of some officers who, furnished with a regular warrant, desired him to follow them. In vain did he convince them that he had paid for his place in the Diligence; they told him his proper place was at *Ste. Pelagie*, where his creditors were expecting him. He was obliged to yield to their earnest solicitations, but this was not done till he had, in an audible voice, imprecated curses on the Diligence, the conductor, the passengers, the postillions, the horses, and in a lump on all the coach offices in the world.

Among all the personages who surrounded me, the most grotesque without comparison, was a very fat man with a triple chin, seated on the pole of a coach, and eagerly taking an inventory of the contents of a basket of excellent eatables, while a young woman who accompanied him, took off his wig, and rubbed his head with a piece of flannel. I approached to observe him a little more at my ease. He tapped me familiarly on the shoulder, asked where

they would breakfast, and seemed delighted to learn that Meaux was the place. "A famous country," cried he, "It is indeed," said I, (mistaking the import of his exclamation,) "you will pass the house, where the *Eagle of Meaux* resided;" "That I don't trouble myself about," replied he, "I think less of all the eagles in the world than a good fat fowl, and those of Brie have a wonderful reputation."

This noble reflection had sufficiently convinced me, that the soul and body of this lusty *Vitellius* were wonderfully well matched; I left him to listen to a dispute which had just arisen between the conductor and an elegant woman round whom the people had gathered. The debate related to a trunk which she had occasion for every evening, and which had been unfortunately stowed away in the bottom of the *basket*. Through her lace veil, and under a great green calash, which concealed part of her pretty figure, I recognized one of our best actresses. She had obtained two months leave of absence from the manager which she was about to

employ in levying contributions on the country theatres, and not having an author in her train, she had provided herself beforehand with a few introductory addresses, farewells, prologues, epilogues, verses, &c. for every one of the towns through which she was to pass. The trunk in question enclosed all these objects of the first importance, not to mention, however, an *Entrepreneur de Succes*,* for whom the priestess of Thalia had secured a place in the boot of the Diligence.

The hour approached, I entered the travellers' room where we were to meet after Charles's breakfast. A place of sorrowful farewells! A great number of persons were seated in pairs on a wooden bench which surrounded the room: near the window a young man and woman of most interesting appearance were weeping, their hands clasped together, and now and then they raised their eyes to each

* An undertaker for success.

other, with an expression of the deepest affliction: a little further on a mother, at the moment of separation from her son, called to the standard of the most powerful of monarchs and the greatest of captains, was lavishing on him marks of the most affecting tenderness. The young man replied with affection, but proud of his new epaulettes, and full of brilliant hopes of glory, he could hardly contain the joy which beamed through his tears.—These moving pictures and others of a similar nature had completely saddened my ideas, and abandoning myself to the sad impressions around me, I said to myself, "There is but a slight difference between a cemetery and an inn-yard, both are places of separation." The arrival of Charles, the signal of departure given by the conductor, still further increased this melancholy, and I felt myself ready to shed tears without any real cause, when a circumstance, foolish enough in itself, dissipated at once these clouds of sorrow.

Those passengers who first entered the coach, had possessed themselves of the best places, and refused to give them up, notwithstanding the representations of the remainder. In short, they never would have come to a right understanding, if the conductor, armed with the way-bill, had not interposed his authority, and assigned to every one his proper seat. By this arrangement Charles was placed in the front, between an old ecclesiastic, who mumbled his breviary, and the little actress who hummed a tune. One of the seats by the door was occupied by the haberdasher, and the other, by a young Physician, who had been maintaining a theory on aneurism. The lusty man who was enamoured of fat fowls, and the officer's lady were seated at the bottom of the vehicle, which their bulk, though meant for three persons, pretty well filled, and they flattered themselves, that they might depart without a third. The last adieus were breathed, the conductor was about to close the door, when a lady of

fourteen stone weight, was squeezed into the coach, with the help of three persons who accompanied her, and, in a moment, jammed herself between the two neighbours at the bottom, who uttered a deep groan, which was answered by the rest of the company, by a violent burst of laughter. An addition to their misfortunes was, that the lady had preserved the old fashion of wearing pockets, which were filled with a variety of implements, and caused the lusty gentleman to complain most bitterly, to the great amusement of every one. Things however, were much worse when her son threw into her lap a growling wolf dog, and her servant handed to her a wooden cage enclosing a large grey parrot, which immediately saluted the company with "*Good day*" and "*Pretty Poll,*" very distinctly. To prevent any inconvenience, the good dame endeavoured to put the cage under her feet, but the bird, whom the darkness doubtless displeased, laid hold of the fat man's leg, which he bit in such a

manner as to make him roar out most lustily. The laughter and noise increased, and recourse was sought at the tribunal of the conductor, who, on the complaint of the wounded man, and the display of his bleeding leg, pronounced for the dismissal of the mutinous parrot. The order being executed, he mounted his cabriolet, and after the postilions had drank their stirrup cup, and smacked their whips, the enormous vehicle was put in motion, making the pavement tremble twenty yards round about.

No. XXII.—29th Aug. 1812.

A WEDDING, *A LA COURTILLE.*[*]

Humani nihil a me alienum puto.

TERENCE.

I feel interested in every thing belonging to human nature.

Jè m'interesse a tout ce qui tient à l'humanité.

I SHOULD be loath to repeat after Chamfort, "*that the great world is confessedly a bad place.*" I can see in such an expres-

[*] The *Courtille* resemble our places of resort in the environs of London, such as Cumberland Gardens, Hornsey, Bagnigge Wells, &c.

sion nothing but one of those tirades full of gall and injustice, whose exaggeration serves, in some measure, to counteract its bitterness; but if I was desired seriously to reply to such an accusation, I must be fain to call to my assistance, in behalf of the great world, that solemn ennui which at all times attends on it, and which only permits those pleasures to penetrate there, whose insipidity does not abridge its rights. For many years, ennui has placed at the gilded doors of the great two guards, to whom it issues orders, never to admit either gaiety, liberty, or ease; these sentinels are taste and fashion, or rather two intruders, who have usurped those valuable names. Galen has enumerated among the number of his prescriptions to prevent bodily ills, a sort of obligation, to break through the strict rules of sobriety once a month; the remedy which I would prescribe to cure, or to prevent the more weighty mental afflictions of the great, that is, of those who feel themselves fatigued with every exertion, is to leave now and

then their splendid palaces, to seek incognito (une guinguette,) a country tea-garden, if it were merely to convince themselves, that such a thing as gaiety existed; and after all, my commands are not so harsh as those of Horace, who with the same intent writes thus:

Plerumque gratæ divitibus vices;
Mundæque parvo sub lare pauperum
Cœnæ, sine aulæis et ostro,
Sollicitam explicuere frontem.*

I fear I shall be thought very old fashioned in my notions, when I venture to say, that there are few things more amusing in Paris, than a Sunday, *de la Courtille*, and if I should own that I often look there for amusement. Since, however, this confes-

* The rich ought sometimes to seek a change of habit; a frugal and unceremonious repast under the roof of the poor, has often smoothed the wrinkled front of care-worn greatness.

sion has escaped me, it only remains for me to endeavour to justify my bad taste, which perhaps I should not so long have retained, had I been less reserved in avowing it.

I am astonished that not a single writer of merit in France, should have employed himself in delineating a faithful picture of the manners of the lower classes of the people of Paris. Perhaps in no other place, could a more decided and more original character be found. Vadé has seized a few traits in his Tableaux Poissards; Pigault Lebrun in several of his romances, has sketched some portraits of this class, which are not deficient in similitude, but which occupy no more marked place in his works than mere episodes. Furetière in his Romans Bourgeois, has devoted too much space to satire, and too little to the description of real manners; it is nevertheless curious to observe, that a hundred years after his time, his likenesses are still acknowledged for the truth and accuracy with which they apply to living manners. I

have myself lately had occasion to verify this observation.

Chance carried me a few days ago, to the house of an inferior wine merchant in La Rue Thibautodé, one of my oldest acquaintances in Paris. This honest man remembers that it is to me he is indebted for the small fortune he possesses, but he forgets that he most probably saved my life, by affording me an asylum at a time when hospitality was reckoned one of the greatest crimes in France. As I drew near the house, I was surprised to see five or six hackney coaches before the door, whose drivers, decorated with ribbons and nosegays, appeared to be waiting for a wedding company. All the inhabitants of the street were at their windows, and the gossips of the neighbourhood, in groupes at the shop doors, were entertaining each other, (loud enough to be heard by the passers by,) with accounts of the newly married pair, of their relations, of the portion, and of the entertainment ordered at *L'Ile d'Amour*. In this way I

learned that Father Burgundy, (the name given to the merchant I was about to visit,) "was going to marry his daughter to his foreman; that Geneviève was 18 years of age, the prettiest girl of that quarter, and the best dancer at *L'Hermitage*: that Honoré, her intended husband, was the younger son of M. Coquenard, a tin-man in La Rue Quincampoix, who had given up his business to his eldest son." I should have gathered much more intelligence if I had listened longer to a fruiteress, who was dying with envy to relate every circumstance to me, but who at the outset took from me all confidence in her story, by betraying her spleen at receiving no invitation to the wedding. I left her to chat scandal with her neighbour, the pork butcher's wife, who appeared to me to have at least equally strong reasons for abusing M. Honoré.

I entered the house of Father Burgundy, who as soon as he saw me, came up to make his acknowledgments with great cor-

diality, and urged me in the most pressing manner to partake of an ample breakfast, after which, they were to go to church. I soon observed that the whispering between M. and Madame Burgundy, had for its object to decide whether they might presume to ask me to the wedding; I should have been exceedingly sorry if their respect had excluded me, and I therefore instantly encouraged them to the right cue, and was immediately invited in due form. The father presented to me his wife, a good jolly housewife. about forty, and she introduced me to her daughter. Geneviève rose and made me a curtesy, the awkwardness of which, was not entirely destitute of a sort of grace, and at her mother's request, she presented her two cheeks to kiss, which for firmness and freshness exceeded any in my recollection. Madame Burgundy accompanied this introduction, with an eulogium on her daughter, in which, she interspersed some advice on the new duties she was about to undertake. Her ideas and sentiments ap-

peared to be so correct and just, that I thought it impossible to have expressed better thoughts in better words.'

Father Burgundy gave the signal, and the company were instantly in motion; the relations placed, or rather wedged themselves, in the first coaches; they found means to cram eight persons into each, and I was honoured by being admitted into that, which contained the bride, with her father and mother.

At our departure, three or four musicians of that section, treated us with a symphony, which every one of them performed to a different tune, without its being remarked, however, in the Rue Thibautodè; we passed along this street at a trot, between two hedges of neighbours, the male part of them accompanied us with their benedictions, while the females preserved a sneering silence, through which the low passions of envy and malevolence peeped out.

Madame Burgundy remarked this as we proceeded; and tracing effects to their

causes, long before we arrived at *St. Germain's-L'Auxerrois*, I was thoroughly acquainted with the scandalous chronicle of all the families from the *Rue de la Monnaie* to *L'Arche-Marion*.

We alighted at the second door of the church, where the clergyman did not come to receive us; the vicar had ceded to his curate this plebeian marriage, for the celebration of which one of the side chapels was thought quite sufficient. I even think the Sacristan played a double part on that day. Nevertheless, as the service proceeded, we gained in consideration. Madame Burgundy and M. Coquenard, the father, were piqued, and made such handsome offerings, that their importance quickly spread round the church, and our departure was much more splendid than our entrance. The door-keeper and beadle were at their posts, and were less surprised at the drink-money given them, when they learnt that the hero of the festival was a wine-merchant.

We traversed all Paris to the Boulevarts. The nosegays of our coachmen, and the noisy gaiety of our company, attracted all eyes upon us: every one was anxious to see the bride, who, covered with blushes, was not less known by them than by her elegant brand-new and glossy Mechlin, and her bouquet of myrtle and orange flowers. Honoré, on leaving the church, had set forward with his father-in-law to superintend the preparations for dinner, and order some previous refreshments. We arrived at *La Courtille*. Monday is here a second Sunday; the weather was delightful, and the assemblage of *amateurs* very considerable. It is impossible, without having seen them, to form an idea of the variety and originality of these tea-gardens. Above an hundred cooks, confectioners, liquor-purveyors, and waiters, are hardly able to satisfy the myriads of artizans, mechanics, and inferior citizens, who, free from all care, inquietude, and forethought, come regularly

to get tipsey at la Courtille, in spite of the rule of Plautus:

> ..... Festo die si quid prodegeris,
> Pro festo egere liceat, nisi peperceris.*

While the saloons and gardens of *Desnoyers*, the *Arc-en-Ciel*, the *Moulin-Joli*, the *Grande-Pinte*, and the *Marroniers*†, resounded with drinking-songs, we were expected at L'Isle d'Amour, where a room and table of 150 covers were prepared for us. Two tavern-keepers of Bercy and des Carrières, friends of Father Burgundy, were charged to provide the wine; Coquenard furnished out of his own warehouse his contingent of eatables from Provence and Languedoc; Madelon, the aunt, the

* If you dissipate your money on a feast-day, when the day of work comes, you will be in poverty, or at least have nothing to spare.

† The signs of several of these places of entertainment, which are so numerous in the environs of Paris.

most famous pastry-cook of the Halle, spent the whole morning in the composition of a sea-pie, which she wished to be a lasting subject of praise; Babet, the cousin, a fruiteress at la Pointe-St.-Eustache, had provided the dessert, and the finest fruits of the season, which, served up to us in the baskets that brought them to Paris, would have gained nothing in my eyes, had they been pyramidically arranged on porcelain.

The young bride, more modest than timid, had not that affected bashfulness which is often met with in the great world on similar occasions: she was happy and not afraid of appearing so. I do not pretend to give any account of the conversation of a hundred and twenty-five guests of this description, met together, as it seemed from the first moment, for the sole purpose of talking, shouting, and laughing all together. This disposition was either mended or made worse, when all their heads became heated with wine—to form an idea of the

confusion, it would be necessary to visit certain of our political assemblies. After the ceremony of stealing and *dividing the bride's garter*, song-singing commenced. When Rousseau said, that *of all academies that which made the most noise was the academy of music*, it is most likely he had never heard a chorus, or a drinking-glee joined in by all the company, at La Courtille.—A salvo of twenty-five pieces of heavy artillery would be the only accompaniment capable of drowning their voices.—When all the couplets of the tea-garden poets, and all the songs most in vogue among the ballad singers were exhausted, we resorted to less noisy amusements. The bridegroom had provided music, and during coffee the cymbals and Barbary organs performed the overtures to Démophon, and of Jeune Henri with indifferent success; but, by way of retaliation, the new romances of The Kiss, and of Aurora, received universal applause. Some exhibitions followed this first part of the concert;

the clown and the learned rabbit appeared alternately on the stage, in the midst of the clapping of hands and bursts of laughter of the company; but the quadruped actor had one advantage over his rival in a well timed trick, the success of which was infallible. Its master had ordered it to beat a drum before the most amorous girl in company;—the little sallad eater passed very orderly in front of all the young ladies, and on arriving opposite the new bride, he began a revielly which lasted above a minute, to the great confusion of poor Geneviéve, and the great amusement of the spectators.—To this, the musical lottery succeeded: I could not discover what connection subsisted between this pastime and a wedding, but on enquiring of a musician how this gallantry had become customary at a marriage, he told me, shrewdly enough, that all games of chance were among its attributes. After some flourishes, two violins, a clarionet, and a great drum were placed at one end of the room on a

permanent orchestra, and the general ball began. Quadrilles were formed, and their dancing resembled their conversation: every one wishing on this joyous occasion to be jigging together. The joyous confusion, continued to a late hour, gave the new married couple an opportunity of escaping unmolested in their midnight retreat. I departed at the same time, but for an entirely different reason. I quietly proceeded along the faubourg du Temple, through a crowd of drinkers, who did not stand quite so firm on their legs as myself, and who, although they had not been at the wedding, were not on that account the less jovial.

END OF VOL. I.

BARNARD AND FARLEY,
Skinner Street, London.

THE

PARIS SPECTATOR;

OR,

L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSÉE-D'ANTIN.

CONTAINING

Observations

UPON

PARISIAN MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Translated from the French.

By W. JERDAN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
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SKINNER-STREET, LONDON.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

THE observations which I place at the head of the Second Volume of my Collection, are not intended to thank the Public for the favourable reception of the first. The writer of a book which pleases, and the reader who purchases a book which amuses, are upon equal terms; but in announcing to the Public the success of his Work, the Author, who has to account for it, is often more embarrassed to justify the decision than to congratulate himself upon it: this is my situation. Endeavouring to exhibit pictures of human manners, in a

dramatic frame, proper to display their various tints, I had equally to fear my likenesses being so general as to resemble no one, or so particular as to be ascribed to individuals. In the first case, I should be uninteresting; in the second applications, would be made where I intended none. I have not been fortunate enough to avoid the latter rock, and (however suspicious such a declaration may appear from the mouth of an Author) I have no hesitation in saying, I have struck upon the rock which I most feared. Some persons constantly occupied in searching for the originals of my Characters, and Models for my Pictures, endeavour to give me a name for scandal and malignity, at which price the highest literary eminence would appear to me

too dearly purchased. The fear alone of such an insinuation would ere now have compelled me to renounce my labours, had I not possessed vanity enough to think myself sufficiently guarded against an accusation of this nature by the opinion of my friends, by my Work itself, and I dare affirm by my own character. In this Sketch of our Manners, (I here renew the declaration) I study to depict society in the mass, and not this or that company. To seize general ideas, and not particular traits: I concern myself with classes and with species, never with individuals. The observations which I make are the result of analysis. Personalities belong only to satire, and I have not to reproach myself, in a single instance, with such dishonour to my pen.

The end which I have proposed, much more than the talents which I employ in carrying it into effect, has given rise to a most dangerous comparison between the SPECTATOR and the Hermit of the Chaussée-d'Antin. Some watchful critics (whose wit and imagination it does not just now suit me to applaud) have endeavoured to establish a sort of parallel between the two Works, by which I am indeed greatly honoured; but one of these Gentlemen has thrown into the balance in favour of the English observer, the gravity of the matters which are sometimes the subjects of his Essays, and the tinge of frivolity which the Hermit generally spreads over his own. In the first place, I have endeavoured to answer this reproach in the present Volume, by allotting less space than in

the former, to the vanities of fashion, or the daily caprices of opinion; but I will add, that Addison, Steele, and their coadjutors in the English Spectator, lived at a time, and in a country, where questions of the most sublime morality, of the highest literature, and of the most profound erudition, so much interested all classes of society, that in London ten thousand copies of a number of the Spectator, treating on the Nature of God, the Immortality of the Soul, or the Superiority of Milton over all other Epic Poets, ancient and modern, were sold in one day. It must be allowed, that the present times are not exactly suited for this species of polemics. One may now be pardoned for being useful, but solely on condition of being agreeable.

Since I am in some sort authorized

to mention the Hermit, after the Spectator, let me be permitted to observe, that I have imposed on myself the task of oftener varying the *frame* of my articles; at least two-thirds of the English Work is under the shape of Correspondence, of which I only make use, when I have to treat on frivolous subjects, or advance observations of little importance, and which are not susceptible of enlargement.

The first Edition of the former Volume of this collection was speedily exhausted. This success, while it decided me to a continuation of the Observations of the Hermit de la Chaussée-d'Antin, has imposed on me new obligations. The Reader will appretiate the efforts which I have made to fulfil them.

THE

PARIS SPECTATOR;

OR,

L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSÉE-D-ANTIN.

No. I.—3d Oct. 1812.

THE SENTIMENTAL WORLD.

(LE GENRE SENTIMENTAL.)

Ille dolet vere, qui sine teste dolet.

MARTIAL.

.... Le vrai deuil, sais-tu bien qui le porte?
C'est certuy-la qui sans témoings se deult.

Imit. de MAROT.

Would'st know when unfeign'd tears are shed?
'Tis when unseen we weep the dead.

Parlerai-je d'Iris? Chacun la prône et l'aime;
C'est un cœur, mais un cœur .... c'est l'humanité même;
Si d'un pied étourdi, quelque jeune éventé,
Frappe en courant son chien, qui jappe épouvanté,
La voilà qui se meurt de tendresse et d'alarmes.
Un papillon souffrant lui fait verser des larmes.

GILBERT.

I THINK with Juvenal that "nature in bestowing tears, meant us to possess sen-

sibility, and I also agree with him, that sensibility is one of her most precious gifts :"* but, it is indeed a gift. We are endowed with it at our birth; it developes itself with us and in spite of us, in forms and shapes as different as the human figure; it is a disposition of the soul, which has only lately become a study. I have seen the basis of this sentimental school laid in France; for half a century I have been acquainted with its principal professors, and have watched its progress from melancholy to vapours, to nervous fever, and to convulsions, inclusively.—Sensibility (I dare not use the word *sensiblerie* with which our language has lately been enriched) has given for some time past, and still confers character in the

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* ..... Mollissima corda.
Humano generi dare se natura facetur.
Quæ lacrymas dedit: hæc nostri pars optima sensus.

Juvenal Sat. 20.

world; many people owe their success to it, after attaining which, they sink into ridicule; for, as Duclos says, affectation is always detected in the end, and then we even fall below the standard of our real value.

One would hardly think in what place, and in the view of what objects, I have made these reflexions: in my *hermitage in the Chaussée d'Antin*, they would appear natural; but in the *hermitage of Jean Jacques Rousseau*, in this charming retreat of the author of Emilius, which the author of *Silvain* now inhabits, when I had before my eyes the little ebony table on which so many pages of the sublimest eloquence have been written, pages in which the finest traits of sensibility are apparent; when all the objects with which I was surrounded recalled to my mind the idea of a writer whose works will ever be the delight of every feeling soul; does it not seem something like profanation to seek the subject of a satire against sensibility in

such a spot? I own I should have but a bad opinion of any one who could visit the habitation of this great man with indifference; who could coldly walk through the little garden in which Jean Jacques meditated on the chapters of Emilius; who could repose himself under the ancient chesnut trees, where he reclined, on returning from his excursions in the forest of Montmorency; but can my respect for the author of some beautiful productions prevent me from laughing at such a ridiculous sight as that of a lady who comes every year on a certain day to this celebrated hermitage, to roll herself on the ground in convulsive spasms, like certain devotees on the tomb of Deacon Paris? Can it prevent me from thinking there is some exaggeration in those tears which are shed by a young mother and her daughter, in the room of a man who sent his children to the hospital? Can it prevent me from smiling at that crowd of pilgrims, who go there only to scrawl their names

on the garden walls, and even on the bust of the hero himself, whose right cheek is entirely covered with the celebrated name of *M. Thotè.*

I have the misfortune, for perhaps it may be one, never to be the dupe of these sentimental juggles, of these *cold* emotions, of these solemn griefs which our actors, and particularly our actors in society, are continually practising. I have more than once baffled the chiefs of this sect; shall I not then be on my guard against their imitators? What I am now writing, I said the other day to a young man who accompanied me in a walk, and whose mind was, I feared, a little tinctured with this affectation.—As we left home I pointed out to him, a few yards from the hermitage, a small house where a young married couple, celebrated in the arts, had shut themselves up some years ago to withdraw entirely from the tumult of the world, and to live only for each other.—"What happiness must they enjoy," ex-

claimed my young companion, "and how much do I envy their felicity." "Let us enter, Sir, and see this charming retreat, the abode of youth, innocence, and love." —I calmed his enthusiasm by informing him that three months after this voluntary seclusion, the husband and wife returned to Paris, each seeking a divorce. "What inference would you draw from this?" rejoined he, a little out of humour, "That we should mistrust a sentiment which displays itself with so much ostentation; that false sensibility is a cloak to cover many other defects; and that real feeling is not always exempt from vanity, and is even sometimes allied to a species of inhumanity."—"I do not comprehend the latter trait," said he, "and should be glad to hear how such a paradox can be maintained." "By examples, which you will not dispute," cried I, laughing, "for I shall take them from among your own acquaintance. I have seen you sometimes at Madame Vernon's; she holds a distinguished rank

amongst our painters, and confesses herself that she owes the principal part of her fame to her excessive sensibility. Every body knows the closeness of the friendship which existed between her and M. Maurice, one of our greatest artists.—He fell dangerously ill at a time when Madame Vernon was employed on her picture of the *Communion of St. Jerome.* She did not, for a moment, quit her friend's bedside, lavished upon him the most tender cares, in which she would suffer no one to participate, even when his disorder assumed a fatal appearance. Her picture remained on the easel for want of a model to finish the Head of St. Jerome, which she wished should rival the finest composition of Dominichino. On a sudden the lady was struck with the spectacle before her eyes; the despair of friendship, in a moment, gave way to enthusiasm for the arts; she seized her pencil, with a steady hand, traced her faithful copy of the features of her dying friend, and finished that portrait,

which is the finest of her works. It is said that M. Maurice, who, contrary to all expectation, recovered from his fit of illness, was not very highly gratified with this mark of attachment.

"I have often heard you boast of M. de Valmont and his wife, as models of every conjugal virtue; you have even, I believe, composed some verses on them, wherein you alternately compare them to Philemon and Baucis, and Pætus and Aria." "And I have highly honoured both those pairs," replied the young man with some warmth. "Will you deny that they adore each other, and that under the snows of age, they have preserved the sensibility and love for each other, which adorned their youth." "You speak more truly than you imagine," answered I, "but I deny nothing; I relate facts, and leave you to decide upon them. Convinced of the sentimental axiom, that in every connexion where souls are closely linked, the object of the greatest pity is the one which has the misfortune to survive

what it loves, each of these, as you shall see, is placed by anticipation in this dreadful condition. I was some little time ago in the country with M. and Madame Valmont at Madame Desmaison's, their relation. One morning I met M. de Valmont in the park at an early hour, and continuing our walk, we arrived at a little bower of sycamores and acacias of a very romantic appearance. We seated ourselves on two broken pillars, and there M. de Valmont, with a voice almost inarticulate from tears, made me acquainted with a project he had formed of erecting on this spot the tomb of his wife: 'She loves this place,' said he, 'it is the part to which she generally directs our walks, and more than once I have surprised her here with her handkerchief to her eyes; her health decays; I guess the thoughts which occupy her mind, and her wish shall be gratified. During all the season I have employed myself, unknown to her, in arranging this little bower, agreeably to the melancholy office it is des-

tined to perform. The idea alone has already cost me many tears.' I was quite astonished with the singularity of such a confidence, and I knew not what reply to make to this a communication, when the bell ringing for breakfast, relieved me from my embarrassment.

"We returned hastily to the house; the repast was despatched with gaiety; Madame de Valmont was in high spirits, and rising from table, she took my arm for a walk, while her husband remained behind to read the newspapers. As we discoursed, either accidentally or on purpose, she led me to the very spot which I had just quitted: at the sight of the little bower, seized with a convulsive trembling, she appeared ready to faint.

"I wished to have conducted her from this gloomy place, but she entered it in spite of my endeavours, and seated herself on the same pedestal which her husband had occupied an hour before. After having smelt to some salts, with which she is

always furnished, 'You must not be sur-
'prised,' said she, sobbing, 'at the sud-
'den illness which has seized me; I fall
'into this condition every time I draw near
'this little grove, and yet I cannot prevail
'on myself to stay away from it.' (I expect-
ed now to hear her talk of her approaching
dissolution.) 'The poor soul sinks apace,'
(continued Madame de V.) 'he often comes
'to meditate in this solitary scene, and we
'never visit it together, but he embraces
'me in a manner which reaches my heart.
'There it is that I have chosen his last
'asylum; the place which I have fixed on
'for his monument is pointed out by this
'weeping willow, which I planted with my
'own hands, and which is often watered
'with my tears.' (My young companion
at this burst into a fit of laughter.) "I had
much trouble to prevent myself from doing
the same thing," continued I, "and I asked
myself the question which now I put to
you—of what nature is the sensibility of
this tender couple, who occupy themselves

while alive with fancying the duties they will perform to each other when they die; and who have the courage to familiarize themselves beforehand with the cruel idea of an eternal separation?

"But as I am in a gossipping humour (old men are not easily stopped) I will relate to you another anecdote of the same species, and for the truth of which the whole town of Montpelier can vouch.

"Dr. Lestrat, one of the most skilful physicians of that place, was betrayed into more follies to obtain the hand of Mademoiselle Emily de Vigneul, than any romantic lover of the first novellist of the day. An inward malady, which snatched Madame Lestrat away two years after their marriage, plunged her husband into the most dreadful despair. Nothing could induce him to submit to a final separation; and to save from the tomb the adored remains of his beloved Emily, he confided her corpse to a skilful artist, who was supposed to possess the Egyptian secret of embalming bodies. His success even sur-

passed his hopes; he saw his wife again; it was herself, her features, her attitude; even her complexion preserved the brilliancy and freshness of life.

"This precious mummy, clothed with an elegant simplicity, was placed as in a sleep on a couch of black velvet, in the cabinet of M. Lestrat; a curtain of sky-blue taffeta concealed her from all prophane eyes, and every day her inconsolable husband paid her a visit, to indulge in his regrets and anguish. During two years, the same affliction, the same attention. At the end of that term, it was observed that the Doctor's visits became less punctual to his wife, and more frequent to Madame Dorsange. By degrees the cabinet was deserted, and the door closed. Six months elapsed, and no one had entered the *sentimental* closet, when M. Lestrat celebrated his second marriage. His new wife, however, who was not ignorant to what a pitch her husband carried his sensibility, insisted on the *repudiation* of her embalmed rival. The Doctor

paid his respects to the Vigneul family, begging them to take back their relation. The Vigneuls, piqued at the new marriage, rejected the proposition. During these negociations, poor Emily was banished to an old box at the bottom of the wardrobe, where the living mistress of the house would not suffer her to remain. The Vigneuls continued obstinate in their refusal, and it became necessary to have recourse to the curate of the parish; but he, on learning they wished him to bury a woman four years after her death, refused her the sepultural rites. In this unfortunate embarrassment the poor Doctor, not knowing to whom to apply, determined to inter the body without any further noise, in a retired corner of his garden; and there are now no vestiges of a woman formerly so much deplored, but six feet of earth, where the grass will no longer grow, on account of the strong smell of camphor and aromatics which still exhale from the Egyptian preparations.

"I do not assert," (added I, on finishing my recital) "like the Stoics, that sensibility is an evil, much less a vice, but I wish you to learn from this conversation the following axiom, that *true sensibility* is a sentiment full of modesty, to which concealment is more necessary than even to love itself."

No. II.—31st October, 1812.

THE CATACOMBS.

Dans ces lieux souterrains, dans ces sombres abîmes,
La mort confusément, entasse ses victimes.

Legouvé, Poëme des Sépultures.

Gli uomani hanno in orrore la morte, io no.

Tasso.

In these dark vaults, in wild confusion laïd,
Death's victims rest—the Temple of the dead.

I have often heard the painter Robert recount, and always with increased interest, his adventure in the Catacombs of Rome. The plain and simple recital of

his fears and agonies in this frightful situation, excites in me, after the lapse of twenty years, an emotion of terror, which cannot perhaps be produced by the whole of the admirable poem of M. De Lille on the same subject. I remember the opening of this moving episode.—

Sous les remparts de Rome et sous ces vastes plaines,
Son des antres profondo,des voûtes souterraines;
Qui, pendant deux mille ans, creusés par les humains,
Donnèrent leur rochers aux palais des Romains.
Avec ses monumens et sa magnificence,
Rome entière sortit de cet abime immense:
Depuis, loin du regard et du fer des Tyrans,
L'eglise encore naissante y cacha ses enfans,
Jusqu'au jour où dû sein du cette nuit profonde,
Triomphante, elle vint donner ses lois au monde,
Et marqua de la Croix les drapeaux des Césars.

The Catacombs are an object of curiosity to all travellers whom the love of the arts attract to Italy; they throng to visit these dark galleries, (peopled with illustri-

ous recollections,) whose monuments in fresco and *bas-reliefs* have served so long as models for the imitation of our greatest artists. Several authors have described the Catacombs of Naples, and particularly those of Rome with the most minute detail: In the first rank of these literary gnomes, stands Bosio, who in the year 1632, published a description of the Catacombs of the last named city, under the title of *Roma Sotteranea;* which has since been translated into Latin, by Aringhi. The name of Bosio's work is the more apt, because it contains in effect an itinerary of a *subterraneous Rome,* and the catacombs are there depicted as the road, by which every one must travel.

The perusal of this work, which is exceedingly commendable for its fidelity, learning, and curious research, begot in me a great desire to undertake a little subterranean tour at Paris, and to range through that part of the quarries, which extend under the plain of the lesser *Mont-Rouge,*

to which their new occupation caused the name of Catacombs to be given. The day of All Souls is now approaching, an epoch, at which I usually devote a few hours to those monuments, which, as the author of Studies of Nature, eloquently says, are placed upon the boundaries of two worlds. I am not a disciple of the melancholy Arthur Young, who is eternally crying in a monotonous and lamentable voice,

> "Death be your theme in every place and hour."

Nothing seems to me more contrary to man's nature and happiness, than this axiom of a gloomy moralist, who, under the pretext of familiarising us with an inevitable evil, is perpetually placing its image before us. Voltaire on the other hand says rightly, "*The continual contemplation of death deceives us; it prevents us from living.*" I still less approve of those learned triflers, of those Sybarite philosophers, who repel every serious reflection, and sport on the surface of life, without daring to think upon

its end. To enjoy it perfectly, it appears to me that its probable duration should occasionally be considered, and we should not be afraid to survey the ravages of time, if we wish to know its value, and regulate its use.

Last Monday at Madame de R *** I mentioned my intention to pay a visit to the Catacombs, and as the license sent me by the Inspector General of the Mines, afforded me an opportunity of taking a companion, several persons offered themselves; I could take but one, and though it was very clear that I would have given the preference to the young lady of the house, one of the prettiest and most amiable girls in Paris: Madame de Sesanne would absolutely venture upon this mysterious promenade with me. I feared the effect on the imagination of twenty years of age, and at first made several objections, in which her mother supported me; but nothing could induce her to renounce the project. "She had heard that in the year 1788, Madame de Polignac

and Madame de Guiche had spent a whole day in these gloomy caverns; she did not think herself less courageous, and had so much confidence too in her old hermit."—It was at length agreed that she should call for me in her carriage, next day at noon.

Madame de Sesanne was punctual to the gloomy rendezvous, and with our pockets crammed with wax tapers and phosphoric matches, (as if we intended to make a fortnight's stay under ground) we drove towards the barrier d'Enfer,* remarking on the singularity of the connexion between this name, and the place which we were about to visit.

The Principal of the works, who had been apprised of our visit the night before, conducted us by a strait staircase under the first vaults, 90 feet below the surface of the earth. For above a quarter of an hour, we followed the windings of a narrow gal-

* *Gate of Hell.* The long street which leads to the Catacombs, is also called the *Street of Hell.*

lery, where from time to time we noticed inscriptions of the date of the year, in which the different parts of these quarries were undertaken. On the roof of the vault and the whole along of our way from the entrance of the Catacombs, a black line has been traced, which might on occasion serve as a clue to any bewildered traveller who lost himself in the mazes of this labyrinth. Some projecting rocks, or a fissure in the walls, at distant intervals, interrupted the uniform aspect of this gallery, into which several smaller branches communicated, which extend themselves under the faubourg St. Jacques as far as the extremity of the Faubourg St. Germain.

Our guide made us quit for a little the course of the Catacombs, and conducted us to a gallery, known by the name of *Port Mahon*. In this quarter, a soldier who had followed Marshal Richlieu to Minorca in the year 1756, and whom his reformation had doomed to work in these quarries, amused himself at his leisure

hours in modelling in the rock, a plan of the fortifications of that island. This monument, which is not one under the cognisance of the art, testifies nevertheless in a most striking manner, the skill, the memory, and above all, the patience of the man, who, without any knowledge of architecture, without means, and without proper tools, could, unassisted execute such a work. My gentle companion was much afflicted at learning from a few words engraven on the stone, that this industrious man, after five years employment without wages on this piece of art, perished a few paces from the spot on which she stood, by the fall of a part of the rock, which he was endeavouring to prop up.

The Catacombs being the exclusive object of our curiosity, we desired our guide to conduct us to them, and we stopped but a single moment to observe a frightful, yet picturesque ruin. Several pieces of rock, supported in equilibrium on their

angular points; the strange positions of these masses, suspended in air, whose fall seemed threatened by every breath of wind, present a configuration so wonderful, that many painters of decorations, have made it the subject of study.

We reached at last a sort of vestibule, at the bottom of which was a black door, ornamented with two pillars of the Tuscan order, and surmounted with this inscription,

Has ultra metas requiescant, beatam spem expectantes.

The moment we set our feet in this dark enclosure, my young companion involuntarily drew closer to me, and I was startled at her paleness and sudden alteration of countenance; she made use of salts, with which I had provided myself, and said, while endeavouring to force a smile, "don't be alarmed, it is from a sudden impression on my mind, and not from fear."

We entered this palace of death; his frightful attributes surrounded us; the walls are covered with them; piles of bones are moulded into arches, or raised into columns, and art has formed from these wrecks of human nature, a species of mosaic work, whose regular appearance adds to the solemn sensation inspired by the place. Death in the bosom of these Catacombs, has something in it less repulsive than elsewhere: his ravages are past, the sepulchral worm has devoured its prey, and the remains have no longer any thing to fear, but from the hand of time, which will eventually crumble them into dust.

All the ancient cemeteries of Paris, all the churches have emptied into these vast caverns, the spoils of human kind, which had been for ages deposited with them. Ten generations are met and absorbed here: and this subterraneous population is estimated at three times the number of those who inhabit and agitate the surface of the soil.

Inscriptions placed on small columns, point out the different quarters of Paris to which these relics once belonged. There, every distinction of sex, fortune and rank, has completely disappeared. The rich robbed of his marble mausoleum; the poor bereft a little sooner of his fir coffin, here mingle together their last remains: and it is here indeed, that equality commences. What reflections, what sublime ideas arise from such images! The author of the *Genius of Christianity* deserves the office of being their interpreter. "The whole soul," says he, "trembles at the contemplation of so much inanity, and so much grandeur. While we seek in vain for expressions sufficiently majestic to describe what is so high, words sufficiently low are at the same time wanting to depict what is so vile. Every thing proclaims that we are in the empire of ruins, and in the very smell of the dust, spread under the funereal arches, we seem to breathe the times that are past."

Emily, recovering her resolution, had quitted my arm, and with the taper in her hand wandered in silence over the cheerless dwelling of the dead. The numerous inscriptions, religious, philosophical, and moral, traced on the walls, by turns attracted her attention. She bid me remark the following verses of Malfilâtre, which I believe are unpublished.

Insensés! nous parlons en maîtres,
Nous qui, dans l'Océan des êtres
Nageons tristement confondus!
Nous, dont l'existence légère,
Pareille a l'ombre passagère,
Commence paraît et n'est plus.*

---

* Blind mortals here, your masters view.
'Mid seas of beings once like you
We swim whole gloomy silent years,
We whose light beings sadly fade
Like flittings of a passing shade,
Which form'd, is seen, then disappears.

She desired me to translate the Latin sentences for her. When I came to this

Quæris quo jaceas post obitum loco?
Quo non nata jacent?

and informed her that it signified

"You seek where you shall be after death?
Where were you before your birth?"

"I don't see," said she, "either the justice or the morality of this maxim, and I am particularly at a loss to conceive that it has any thing in common with that from Addison, which I read a little further on,

"If the soul ends with the body, whence then does our presentiment of immortality come?"

"I do not approve of it any more than yourself," replied I, "and particularly in such a place as this. Contradictory opinions mingled together, weaken at least if they do not destroy each other. I love to believe that doubt quits man at the gate of the tomb, but hope descends with him to point out eternity on the opposite shore."

After visiting several rooms, and wandering through the galleries which led to them; we arrived at a little chapel, at the end of which, a small expiatory altar is erected. Its form has something in it still more frightful than the rest of the Catacombs. Seeking for an inscription, which should inform us to whose manes, or whose memory it is consecrated; we read, or at least thought we read, in letters of blood—this dreadful date—2d SEPTEMBER, 1792, on a piece of granite. My companion uttered a cry of horror, and to her disturbed imagination, a long groan seemed to be heard. Surprised myself, at an unexpected sound, I started and looked anxiously round.

Our conductor then, with some trouble, opened the door to the Geological Cavern, which is to contain specimens of every mineral in the earth, under which these quarries are dug. This apartment led us to another, where the anatomical deformities are collected, classed and ranged in order. The

aberrations from nature, and the endeavours of art to assist her, are strongly visible in some of the specimens. For these two subterranean cabinets, and the general improvements which have been made for several years in the Catacombs, we are indebted to M. Héricart de Thury, Chief Engineer in the Imperial Corps of Miners.

While I was contemplating these specimens of anatomy, Madame de Sesanne was leaning at a little distance from me, on an antique altar, formed entirely of human remains. (This work, and several others of the same sort, do honour to the talent, and to the taste of M. Gambier, who presided over the arrangement of these mournful materials.) While standing in this pensive attitude, one of the roses of her bouquet scattered its leaves on the altar and pedestal. I should be unable to describe the ideas which rushed to my mind; the emotions which agitated my heart in beholding, under these gloomy vaults, an old man approaching his eightieth year,

a woman shining in all the splendour and freshness of youth and beauty, meditating on the dust of the dead, and rose leaves scattered on heaps of human bones.

The voice of our guide awoke us both from the deep reverie in which we were absorbed. We hastened to the stairs towards the east of the route to Orleans. Emily setting her foot on the first step, perceived that I stopped behind: "Come, come," said she, "don't you see they are going to shut the door." "I was thinking within myself," said I, laughing, "whether it was worth my while to go out." She ran to me, took my hand; I saw a tear start from her beautiful eye; and the emotion which I felt, left me no room to doubt, that I ought yet to live a little longer.

No. III.—9th January, 1813.

THE EPOCHS OF FRENCH GALLANTRY.

* In amore hæc insunt omnia.

Ter. Eun. Act. 1. Sc. 1.

Toutes ces bizzareries appartiennent à l'amour.

All these follies belong to love.

An excellent poem might be written on this subject: imprimis, it might be short, (no small recommendation at this period,

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* In amore hæc omnia insunt vitia, are the words of Terence.—*Tr.*

when the style of the Gods is so little in use among mortals:) but, if the author belongs to the modern school, if he delights in the descriptive, how many fine opportunities does it present for multiplied details of *tournaments*, of *pilgrimages*, of *convents*, of *closets*, of *moon-shine?* And, if it should happen that he is imbued with this antiquated notion, that in order to be read more than once, it is necessary to excite an interest in the actions, characters, or sentiment, of how many heroical, satirical, tragical, and melancholy episodes, may not this same subject be made the basis? As for the plan, might not one imagine a very smart discussion in the *Champs-Elysées*, between *Clotilde de Surville*, *Madame de la Suse*, the *Duchesse de Berri*, or any other beauty of our times, who may have recently been removed from life? Each of these ladies might undertake to prove that the era in which she lived, was distinguished by the most amiable and brilliant gallantry; each might adduce her examples

and proofs; Love might be selected as the umpire, and might pronounce according to his custom, without regard to right, in favour of her, whose elegance and loveliness conferred the strongest effect upon her side of the cause. Having thus indicated to poetry a subject for a picture, let us attempt in humble prose, to sketch the principal features.

"Politeness and gallantry are extinct; the revolution has utterly destroyed those delightful qualities, for which our country was distinguished among all the nations of Europe."

Such is the indirect reproach, which I every day hear addressed to our young people; and though I do not presume to assert, that it is not in some respects well-founded, I will say, at least, that it is not altogether new. When I entered upon the world, my grandmother eulogized without ceasing, at the expence of men of my age, the easy and brilliant manners of the young gentlemen of the court of the Regent; my

mother, on her part, declaimed against the formal manners which devotion had introduced at the court of the Dauphin. Some twenty years after, the *Talons-rouges de Versailles,** treated the young *Angloma-nists* of the new court as grooms. What are we to infer from these periodical complaints? That politeness and gallantry are subject to frequent variations, and that to argue that they no longer exist, because they assume other aspects, would be to resemble the man who pretended that he gave over wearing clothes, because the fashion had changed. On retracing the annals of our history, it is surprising to observe the various forms, under which gallantry is there presented, and the different parts which it there performs. Adventurous and chivalrous under the worthies of the

* This is a common expression for the young courtiers at Versailles, who wore *red heels* to their shoes.

second race, it became morose and rigid under the first kings of the third, who were heartless in their actions, and only lived in the circle of the officers of their household.

The era of the crusades restored gallantry to heroic and religious forms, and added to it a sentimental feeling, to which it had hitherto been a stranger. A lover went to Palestine to conquer the heart of his *adored lady*, and by her order undertook this warlike pilgrimage. He received from her hands a scarf which he wore in every combat, and which his faithful squire was bound to lay, stained with his blood, at the feet of his mistress, if it happened that the brave knight fell under the swords of the infidels.

In those times they called love the *Undertaker (Entrepreneur)* of great actions. *Ah! if my Mistress saw me!* exclaimed a knight of Fleurange as he mounted to the assault. So severe were the laws of gallantry, that every warrior convicted of having slandered the sex, was excluded from assemblies and tournaments. The

slightest insult offered to a woman, of whatsoever condition of life, imprinted an indelible blot. Discretion was one of the characters of gallantry at this memorable epoch. The amours of Thiebault Count de Champagne, and Queen Blanche, afford a striking proof of this fact. So thick is the veil under which they shrouded themselves, that after all the historical and critical dissertations, of which they have been the object for five hundred years, the nature of their sentiments and of their connexion still remains a mystery. It is worthy of remark, that the most authentic testimony which we have of the love of a prince, and, what is more, of a poet for a young and beautiful queen, is to be found in an ancient chronicle, of which I shall quote a few lines, in order to give an idea of the language of gallantry in the thirteenth century:

"On this occasion, Queen Blanche was present, who said to the Count (Thiebault) that he should not take up arms against the

king, her son, and should remember that he came to him for succour into his own territories, when the Barons made war upon him. The Count looked at the Queen, who was as charming as she was wise, till, quite astonished at her great beauty, he answered, 'By my faith, madame, my heart, my body, and all my dominions are at your command; there is nothing which you can wish me to do, which I will not willingly perform; never, so help my God, will I act against you or yours.' Thence he departed in a very pensive mood, and often thereafter called to his remembrance the sweet looks of the queen, and her lovely countenance."*

In the following age, the Troubadours

* The above quotation is in old French, beginning, "a cette besogne était la Royne Blanche, laquelle dit au compte," &c.—but it does not seem necessary to transcribe it into this note, or to imitate it by a translation, into equally obsolete English.

by their songs, inspired the taste for a species of gallantry, subtle, elegant, and refined. From this source emanated those disputes in amatory verse, (*Tensons*) in which adoring knights maintained the cause of their mistresses; from this, sprung those *Courts of Love* where questions of the utmost nicety, and the most complicated in gallant metaphysics were gravely discussed; where public accusations of inconstancy, of rebellion against the fair were followed by sentences sometimes sanguinary, promulgated in the most solemn manner, and executed with all their rigour.

The long minority of Charles VI., the misfortunes of his reign, the dissoluteness of Isabeau of Bavaria, led of a sudden to the prevalence of the most unrestrained laxity of conduct, instead of the most guarded and scrupulous reserve. Bois-Bourdon paid with his life, for the boldness of his good fortune; the Duke of Orleans met a similar fate, the Duke of Burgundy having caused him to be assassinated at the

corner of the *Rue Barbette* in 1407, which event was the signal for a disastrous war, under the desolation of which France was nearly destroyed.

The reign of Charles VII. is one of the most celebrated epochs of French gallantry: at that period, two women in a great measure decided the fate of the monarchy and of the monarch. Charles, slumbering in the arms of Agnes Sorel, suddenly awoke at the sight of the heroine of Saint-Remi; his courage revived, and, prepared to follow the Amazon under the walls of Orleans, he inscribed with the point of his sword on the bed-chamber wall of his beloved Agnes, the following verse, which was as gallant as it was heroic:

Gente Agnès, qui tant bien m'evance,
Dans le mien Cœur demeurera
Plus que l'Anglais en notre France.*

* These lines admit of being paraphrased:
" Dear Agnes, whom I love so well,
Thou longer in my heart shalt dwell,
Tho' left till tried the battle's chance,
Than English shall remain in France.

All the lords of the court of Charles VII., and particularly the bastard of Orleans, that illustrious *Dunois, legitimated by victory,* as Duclos has most happily said, were conspicuous for their bravery and their gallantry. I remark as a circumstance peculiar to our history, that these two qualities are almost always to be found united in the persons, whose names are handed down to posterity with the greatest renown. This fact may probably account for the love of glory, which forms so prominent a part of the character of the female sex in France, and which seems to exclude every coward from the honour of participating in their favour.

The mysterious politics of Louis XI., his gloomy character, his suspicions, his cruelties, his designs against the great vassals of the crown, did not in the slightest degree assimilate with the amiable manners of the preceding reign. Margaret of Scotland, however, who loved poetry and literature, and was gifted with an enlightened mind, preserved for a considerable time at the

court of her austere husband, that urbanity and politeness, of which she was herself the model. This was the Princess who embraced the poet Alain Chartier, when asleep in one of the saloons of the palace.

Towards the end of the reign of Louis XII., gallantry resumed its empire. His Majesty on his third marriage, espousing a very young princess, deemed it necessary to conform his tastes and habits to those of his youthful queen. This complacency hastened his dissolution.

"The good king," (says a historian of those times) "in compliment to his wife, entirely changed his mode of life; for instead of dining as he had been accustomed to do at eight o'clock, he now dined at noon; instead of retiring to rest at six o'clock in the evening, he often did not go to bed till midnight."

The duke of Angoulême, afterwards Francis I., became enamoured of the Queen, and this first passion, betraying a rather too violent affection for the sex, at the same time developed that elegance of

manners, that exquisite politeness, those gentlemanly feelings, (as he himself termed them) which spread such a blaze of splendor over his reign.

Ascending the throne at the age of twenty-one, Francis I. devoted himself to the pleasant task of attracting the fair sex to his court, and of detaining them there by the charming bonds of a chivalrous gallantry, which the whole nation hastened to imitate. Love intrigues, tournaments, carousals, distinguished every day of a reign, in which the beautiful Duchesses of Estampes and Valentinois, shone in the foremost rank, in which the Admiral Bonnivet rendered himself famous by his great successes, in which the Chevalier, without fear *(sans peur)*, Bayard himself did not disdain to consecrate to the fair, some of the moments stolen from glory.

After Henry II., who inherited the taste of his father, and who fell a victim to his fondness for tournaments, gallantry disguised itself for half a century under

forms so absurd, so foolish, so little French, that it is impossible to recollect them, or at least to declare what we remember.

It re-appeared with Henry IV., less modest, less polished, but more lively, and more energetic, than under Francis I. The following *billet* from the worthy monarch to the Duchess of Beaufort, will paint the gallant manners of this epoch, much better than I could hope to pourtray them.

"My Dear Love,

"Two hours after the receipt of this note, you will see that Cavalier, who is extremely fond of you, called the King of France and Navarre, titles certainly honourable, but very troublesome: that of your lover is much more delicious. All the three together are good, with whatever *sauce** they

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* * This is an idiomatic phrase in the original, but the whole letter is worth preserving in a a note:

"Mes belles amours, deux heures après l'ar-

are dressed, and I am firmly determined not to yield them to any one."

Gallantry was a pleasure at the court of Henry IV.; it became a matter of business at that of Louis XIV. It is thus, for example, that Madame De la Fayette speaks of it:

"Ambition and gallantry were the soul of this court, and alike monopolized the attention of the men and women: the former had so many interests, and so many different cabals, and the latter, so heartily participated in them all, that love intrigues mingled in every affair of state, and every affair of state was mingled with love intrigues. Nobody escaped the contagion;

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rivée de ce Porteur, vous verrez ce Cavalier qui vous aime fort, qu'on appelle le Roi de France et de Navarre, titres certainement honorables, mais bien pénibles; celui de votre amant est bien plus délicieux. Tous trois ensemble sont bons, à quelque sauce qu'on les mette, et je suis bien résolu à ne les céder à personne."

no one was tranquil, neutral, or indifferent. They dreamt only of ambition, of pleasure, of service, or of mischief: they were neither acquainted with languor nor laziness, but were incessantly occupied with enjoyments and amours."

It is worthy of observation, that at this epoch, gallantry was so much participated between the court and the city, that its votaries not only often joined in the same pursuits; but that upon more than one occasion, in the course of the grand age,* they met and opposed each other. The *Marais* and the *Place-Royale* became, for the first time, the points of union or of contest, for the choice spirits and the great noblemen. The Grammonts, the Villarceaux, the D'Effiat, there met Marion de Lorme, or Ninon de l'Enclos to escort them to the copse, the chapel, or the carriage. The gallantry of the court was noble, decent, perhaps

* The age of *Louis le Grand.*

even a little too ceremonious: that of the city, of which Ninon was the head of the school, without being remarkable for extreme reserve, was not, however, exempt from a sort of mysticism, which tended to spiritualize sentiment, and give currency and credit to the precious jargon of Clétie and Artamène.* One of the foremost gallants of the age, and one of the most zealous devotees of the modern Aspasia, Saint-Evremond, thus addressed her in a poem, written for consolation during a disorder which threatened the destruction of her beauty.

Si ce visage taut vanté
Pèrdait ces appas qu'on encense,
J'amerais lors votre beauté
Comme on vous aime en votre absence.

Oh! if your loveliness were reft,
Nor trace of charm, nor feature left:
Your beauty still I'd love the more;
As absent, I yourself adore.

* Romances of that time.

The excessive politeness of Louis XIV., who would not retain his hat upon his head in the presence of a woman, of what rank soever she might be, was not the only example set before the eyes of the courtiers. The brilliant Lauzun distinguished himself by a species of manners entirely the reverse, and even at that period displayed an *insolence of fashion*, which has since been carried to perfection! The customs which gallantry introduced into the great world were a protection against the caprices of fashion. We may remember that the Marquis de Vardes, celebrated for the elegance of his manners, and for the triumphs which he had enjoyed, on repairing to court after several years of exile, was received with a burst of general laughter: he made his complaint to the king, with as much grace as skill. "*Sire*," (said he,) "*I perceive that when one has the misfortune to be banished from your Majesty, he is worse than unfortunate, he becomes ridiculous.*"

The reforms which Madame de Maintenon introduced at court, the extreme constraint to which the Duke of Orleans was obliged to submit in the presence of a monarch bigotted to the observance of the most minute forms of devotion, prepared the way for that excess of licentiousness, of scandal, and of folly, which acquired the name of gallantry under the regency.

The misfortunes of the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV., the fatality which hung upon the royal family, who were almost entirely swept away by death in the course of a single year, had banished gallantry from a court, or rather from a monastery of which Madame de Maintenon was the abbess. The Duke of Orleans, unable to conform to *Rule*, indemnified himself at the Palais Royal, for the curb which he endeavoured to impose upon himself at Versailles, in the presence of Madame de Maintenon, who mortally hated him, and of the king who feared him, even when he did him justice. *My nephew is*

nothing but a boaster of crimes, said Louis XIV., and in this short sentence afforded a more correct idea of the character of the Regent, than is to be found in the philippics of his enemies, or the eulogies of his flatterers.

Quand Auguste avait bu, la Pologne était ivre.

"When Augustus had drank, Poland was drunk." This observation of the Great Frederick is still more applicable to France, where the manners of the Prince have so prodigious an influence upon the manners of the nation. On the death of Louis XIV. the court instantly assumed a new appearance: Madame de Maintenon was no sooner banished to St. Cyr, than the women, tearing off the mask of religion which they had assumed to render themselves acceptable to her, shewed that it was impossible to be more ardently disposed than they were to enter into the innovations of gallantry to which the Regent led the way.

The decorum, however, which the age of the King seemed to demand, the presence of the Bishop of Frejus, his preceptor, the ceremonious forms of the ancient court, which the old *Marechal* de Villeroy, the Governor of Louis XV., persevered in observing, still perpetuated at the Tuileries a remnant of etiquette, which the Regent sought every opportunity to overturn. It was with this design that he authorized the establishment of the masked balls of the opera, the first idea of which originated with the Abbé, afterwards Cardinal Dubois. The public treasure was exhausted;—in order to meet these expences, to provide for the extravagance of his favourites (whom he called his *wheels, roues*), the luxury of his mistresses, and the follies of his daughter, the Duchess of Berri, the Regent had recourse to farmers of the revenue; that he might procure money from them, it was necessary that he should facilitate their measures for obtaining it;—and they were not of that description of persons to throw

away the advantages of so fine an opportunity. The public purse passed into the hands of rigorous collectors, whence it only found its way to feed this mercenary gallantry, this shameful traffic between wealth and beauty, of which Le Sage, in *Turcaret*, has drawn so admirable and faithful a picture.

In the midst of this licentiousness and disorder, the measure of which was complete, politeness and the graces still found two places of refuge—the *Court of Scèaux*, and the *Society of the Temple*. The former, of which the Duchess of Maine was the chief, renouncing political intrigue, combined in its circle all that was most amiable and illustrious in France.—Fontenelle, La Motte, Saint Aulaire, were among its members, and Voltaire carried to perfection that exquisite taste, that delicate and satirical tact, for which he is distinguished above all other writers. The Society of the Temple, of which the Grand Prior de Vendome was the soul, was not

entirely so regular: it professed a doctrine a little more Epicurean, but favourable to mental enjoyments, to suavity of manners, and the charms of social union—even wisdom shut her eyes to those things which might elsewhere have appeared reprehensible.

Before adverting to the epoch of a new gallantry, which the death of the Regent introduced, I ought to say a few words respecting a man whose scandalous influence was felt throughout the whole age in which he lived. Richelieu burst upon the world in possession of a great name, an immense fortune, a considerable portion of spirit, grace, and merit. He devoted his whole life to the sex, and became by that means their idol. His earlier successes attracted notice; he had the good fortune or the address to fall twice into the same course with the Regent, and that prince, of all others the least practicable, manifested his resentment in a way which augmented the reputation of his young rival.

The passionate fondness of the ladies of the court, some romantic intrigues with females of a lower class, a shameful adventure with a young trader of the Rue St. Antoine, a suspected connexion with a princess of the blood, a pretended conspiracy, the Bastile, and a forced marriage, all conspired to render the Duke de Richelieu, the leading man of fashion and the hero of the gallantry of the 18th century. Equally fortunate in having attributed to him the success of the battle of Fontenoy, and the conquest of Mahon; distinguished in his embassy to Vienna for pageantry, which was made to pass for policy; the friend of Voltaire (to whom he owes the best part of his reputation), received before him into the French Academy, he acquired at the smallest cost, glory of every possible kind; and deprived at the close of his life of the favour which he had for so long a period enjoyed, he was consoled by causing himself to be proclaimed *the Sultan of the Green-room (le Sultan des Coulisses)*.

Louis XV., married at an early age to a Princess, with whose perfections he was so deeply smitten as to discover charms in her which even his courtiers could not perceive, speedily lost this happy illusion, of which the Countess de Mailly was the first to make him ashamed.—It does not enter into my plan to follow this Prince through the career of his gallantries, which had only an indirect effect upon the public character. Gallantry, at this period, had nothing in common with love, not even so much as the desire of possession, to which was attached much less value than to the scandal which might result from it: the word love was merely used to express a caprice of vanity, a fragile tie, a silken string so slight as often to break without the knowledge of those who had formed it. —This libertinism gave birth to a peculiar jargon, in which the most odious vices, the most dissolute actions, the most scandalous adventures were detailed in a decorous language, the use of which was

adopted in good company. Gresset has preserved some traces of this in his comedy of *Mechant;* but it is in the romances of the younger Crebillon, and in the songs of Callé, that we must look for the letter and the spirit of these times. The merit of a man of fashion was then estimated, not according to the number of women whom he had *had* (avait *eues*), to speak in the phrase of the time, but by the number of those he had dishonoured. All Paris has known one of the Corypheuses of this despicable school, who employed no other means,—whom it cost nothing more to ruin the reputation of twenty women, than the sending of his chariot to their door at four o'clock in the morning.

The establishment of the *Parc-aux-Cerfs*, suggested the idea of *Petites-Maisons*, mysterious asylums consecrated to pleasure, whence the ladies of the court were finally expelled by the courtesans. The former re-assumed all their rights when, succeeding Madame de Pom-

padour who held a middle rank between the two classes, Madame Dubarry came with such unblushing effrontery to disgrace the palace of kings.

The ensuing reign commenced with happy reforms; the empire of courtesans was overthrown at Versailles; but its seat transferred to *Luciennes*, kept Paris in dependence to the era of the revolution. The luxury of Duthé and of Thévenin rivalled in many public entertainments the pomp of royalty itself. Virtuous women then assumed a part to which it is to be wished they would oftener have recourse; they distinguished themselves by a marked degree of exterior modesty, and by the extreme simplicity of their dress. The men took them at their word, and as an essay of the English manners, which were becoming the fashion, the petits-maitres of the court and city treated the women with a *respect the most impertinent;* the drawing rooms and cabinets were deserted for the tavern, tennis, and horse-racing. After having

spent the morning with grooms and jockeys*, our tonish gentlemen passed the evenings in undress, emulating their valets in the honours of the public houses, or in their appearance at the theatres of the Boulevarts.

It would be shocking to associate the word gallantry with the frightful disorders of which the Revolution made those who were not its accomplices the witnesses or victims: but in refraining from painting any part of this picture, which does not belong to my subject, it may not be amiss to remark, that at this terrible epoch the women, and particularly in Paris, are known to have preserved, ennobling themselves by their conduct, the finest traits of the national character. They may be divided into two classes—the victims and the heroines; the first, in the prisons, afforded an example of courage, and of that practical philosophy, one of the laws of which was to employ in

* These words are now naturalized in France.

doing good those days which every moment threatened to terminate: the other, devoted to the noblest occupations, and though still at liberty, in a situation not less perilous, consecrated their whole existence to save, to preserve, or to defend the lives of a father, son, friend, or husband, whom at last in more than one instance they were seen voluntarily to accompany to an honourable scaffold.

In those times of misery and disgrace, when compassion was held to be treason, and when politeness was a capital crime, urbanity, the social affections, mutual regard, all the amiable qualities which enter into the composition of the French character, sought refuge in the dungeons, where love often discovered the means of soothing or of dissipating the horrors of present imprisonment and well-founded apprehension of the future destiny.

The 9th Thermidor* arrived; to days of

* 27 July, 1794—the fall of Robespierre.

mourning suddenly succeeded days of rejoicing: an age of oblivion was in a moment heaped upon the misfortunes of the past; pleasure alone was pursued; the evenings of the Hotel Thélusson, and of the Pavillion d'Hanovre, the balls of Richlieu and Frescati, re-assembled together all those who survived, and whose earliest anxiety seemed to be to dance upon the ruins. The *Victims* had their ball, where the very same women whose heroism we so highly admired a few weeks before, were not remarkable for any thing but the absurdity of their dress and the inconceivable levity of their behaviour.

The re-establishment of the monarchical power has put an end to these saturnalia, and France, restored to its ancient institutions, has recovered, as if by enchantment, its manners, its customs, and something of that pristine gallantry, of which it was thought the tradition was lost. I am aware that from time to time certain censorious cynics complain that our young Frenchmen

conduct themselves in a manner too cavalier for polished society, and betray a degree of confidence bordering on presumption; but can we without injustice exact, that young people whose education makes men of them so early that the majority have, at twenty years of age, their names associated with several victories; can we, I repeat, exact from these, our young contemporaries, reared in the camp under the flag of their country, that they should be able to present themselves in a fashionable party with all that elegance of manners, that refinement of politeness and gallantry, which can only be acquired by constant intercourse with female society, and which is, with good reason, esteemed in France the finish of education? This last part of the task of women is very agreeable to perform, and these delightful instructors are too great admirers of glory not to be willing to receive her votaries into the number of their pupils.

No. IV.—23d JAN. 1813.

A HACKNEY-COACHMAN'S DAY.

Lœtus sorte tuâ vives sapienter.

HORACE, Ep. 10.

La sagesse est de vivre heureux dans son état.

Wisdom consists in making ourselves content with our situations.

"IT is very singular," as was remarked to me some days ago, by a foreigner, a man of considerable talent, "that in your language there are certain words to which, in common conversation, we attach a meaning

totally different from that which belongs to them according to your dictionary. How could a man born any where but on the banks of the Seine or of the Loire, guess that the phrases—"*That is a man of the "world—who has seen the world—who "knows the world,*" signify in their new acceptation, that is a man of such a place, who has never quitted the little circle to which he belongs, and who knows nothing beyond one small part of a class the least numerous in society?" The stranger was right; but I astonished him much more, by informing him that the greater portion of those who use this metonymy, suppose they give to the words their literal meaning, and really believe that there is no other *world* but that in the midst of which they live, and of which they form a part. Attempt to prove to them that society is composed of many classes, all of which, from the highest to the lowest, have their particular manners, customs, and forms, the examination of which is neither destitute in interest nor instruction,

and they will listen to you with the most profound disdain, and scruple not to assume that *you* yourself have not mixed much with the world. For a long time past I have accustomed myself to disregard the prejudices of the *bon ton;* and in order to become better acquainted with the inhabitants of a house, have taken opportunities of studying them in every story. The desire of ennobling all things, of banishing contrasts, by reducing every object to conformity with established principles, begins to be conspicuous even in the arts and literature. Men fear to degrade their gravers, their pens, or their pencils, by condescending to delineate the manners of ordinary life; and, abusing the principle, that the arts ought only to imitate nature refined and elevated, they expose themselves to the danger of becoming mere affected mannerists. Good taste may applaud at the same time the widely differing beauties of Raphael and Teniers; the woes of *Iphigenia* and the drolleries of *Little John.*

The artist whose ambition is not bounded by a desire to succeed in painting Arabian landscapes, ought to furnish his *Album* with figures from all conditions in life, and though there are many of which the originals can only be found in garrets, in seaports, and in alehouses, it is to such places, whatever may be said on the subject *in the world*, that the artist ought to direct his steps, in order to sketch their portraits. I have often heard it said of Préville, that he had taken from an alehouse at Courtille his comic character of *La Rissole*. It was at the same school that Taconet studied so admirably the manners and habits of coblers, that this excellent actor never finds himself more at home than in the character of a cord-wainer. If the painter and the actor have often occasion to seek characters at the alehouse, the dramatic poet, the moralist, and the romance-writer, will find it no less their interest to go thither sometimes, to take their notes.

This little preamble was necessary to ex-

cuse in the eyes of people of *the world* the adventure which I am about to relate. Last Monday I took a walk in the "*Jardin des Plantes*," and had taken, leisurely enough, rather a long stroll for a man of my years. In returning I found myself a little fatigued, and as I was still far from home, I determined to hire a coach. I was directed to a stand in the street "*des Filles du Calvaire*," where I found a number of carriages ranged on the left hand side of the way, and the horses, left to themselves, seeking at the bottom of a bag suspended from their necks, a few oats, the remainder of the day's peck which was their allowance; but from one end of the line to the other, I could discover nothing of the coachmen. A dealer in rags noticed my embarrassment from his stall, and obligingly told me, pointing with his hand to a cabaret of the meanest appearance, that "the coachmen you are looking for are at dinner with Mother Henry." I went in, and was instantly so much attracted by the novel

scene which presented itself, that I was induced, instead of a coachman, to call for a dinner. Being but indifferently dressed, Dame Henry fixed her eyes very attentively upon me, and suffered me to repeat my call twice before she invited me into *the Parlour*, to which I was now conducted by a little girl, armed with an enormous tinned copper ladle, full of a greasy water, which was here emphatically called *broth*. I found in this parlour, that is to say in a place enclosed by four walls, blacked with smoke from top to bottom, about a dozen of hackney-coachmen seated in rows on each side of a very long and narrow table, at the end of which I took my place. After giving my neighbours their soup, the little girl, whom I heard them call Manette, placed before me a pint of wine, a tin cup, a pewter spoon, and an iron fork, the knives being (according to the custom of this house) fastened to the table by a small metal chain. In serving up a very frugal repast, which however was not so bad as I

had expected it would be, Manette asked, "have you brought any bread with you?" and my answering in the negative appeared to add to the good opinion she had previously entertained of me. My dinner was but a pretext—my object was only to see and hear, and I cannot complain of having lost my time. At first the conversation was not general, each being engaged in chat with his neighbour. One complained of the conduct of his proprietor, another applauded the arrangement he had succeeded in making with his. *This,* being paid by the day, looked to find his account in what he could subtract from the food allowed for his horses; while *that* related all the little tricks he had played off to multiply the number of his fares, and to add to his *pour boires**. I entered into conversation with the *whip* who was seated next to me, a fat jovial fellow, apparently about forty-five years of age. A bottle of wine, which

* Drink-money.

I called for, and of which I poured out several glasses for him, gained me his entire confidence, and in less than a quarter of an hour, he had given me a complete outline of his history. I found that he had been successively, coachman to a kept-woman, from whose service he had been dismissed for a trifling indiscretion; stable keeper to a young gentleman, whose creditors had seized his horses; and courier to a banking house, for which he had travelled seven and twenty times to Hamburgh. Fatigued with so many journies, he had rested himself, and passed two years in the service of an old physician, whose one-horse carriage *(la demi fortune)* he had driven, and who had closed his career by following his patients—to the other world. Carried away by ambition, he had next taken the reins of the carriage of a minister of state, whom he had had the misfortune to overturn a short time back, on the route from St. Cloud. The loss of reputation in all the stables, consequent upon this accident, had in-

duced him to try his fortune on the public stand, where he found himself so comfortable, that he would not change his *old Benjamin* for the finest livery in Paris. Every day, to be sure, was not equally fortunate, but one made up for another, and such a day as he had just passed, consoled him for the disappointment of many others. I was curious to know the particulars of this lucky day, and a second bottle of fifteen-penny wine which I ordered, made him as willing to recount, as I was to listen to them.

"On Saturday morning," said he, "at seven o'clock, in coming from my proprietor's house, which is in the street *de Bussault, Little Grey* my off horse gave two kicks.—'Aha! that's good,' said I to myself, 'the windfalls will be lucky to day; this is an omen which I had never known to fail.' And truly, just as I had turned the corner of the street, two men, one of whom carried a square box under his arm, stopped me, got into my coach, and or-

dered me to drive them to the *Carriéres** of Montmartre. When I arrived at the barrier, I perceived two young men waiting, who made a sign for me to stop; those whom I had brought there, left the carriage, and retired with the persons I have just mentioned. I followed them at a slow pace, they quitted the high road, and from my seat, I observed that they descended into a sort of ravine. I had scarcely lost sight of them, when I heard the sound of fire arms. A few minutes afterwards one of the gentlemen I had brought there, ran to me, put twelve francs into my hand, and disappeared, having first desired me to wait for the others. The two young men I had met at the barrier, one of whom was wounded, got into my carriage, and I drove them with all the speed my horses could exert, to the baths of Tivoli. For this I received six francs more. This is

* Burying place.

one of the most lucrative duels I have ever had.

"As I gaily regained the Boulevart, I happened, without at all intending it, to entangle my vehicle with the wheels of an Auditor's cabriolet, who for this offence would have sent me to prison. The Commissary of Police however, decided in my favour, and the master of the cabriolet was obliged to pay me for double the time which he had caused me to lose. Before I had reached the stand, I was engaged by a gentleman, who from wearing his silk stockings and dress coat at eleven in the morning, I recognised to be a candidate for a seat in the legislative body. I conducted him to the houses of all the Senators of the Chaussée D'Antin, and of the Faubourg Saint Honoré. He was no where received, and would not have paid me more than the regular fare for the time we had passed together, if my watch, which was right by his when we set off, had not gained an hour by the time we arrived at

the place last mentioned. Scarcely had I disposed of the candidate at his door in the Rue *Froid-manteau*, when a chambermaid made a sign for me to follow her, and place my coach at the corner of the street Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre. After examining my vehicle to see that it had blinds, she gave me a five franc piece, took my number in writing, and bid me wait there for a lady who would soon be with me, and whom I should know by her muff. This was a good opportunity for giving my horses breakfast, and for taking some myself. I drew from the boot of my coach a bag of oats, which I divided between my poor beasts, giving however, as I ought, the best share to little grey, as a reward for his lucky omen. I was just going to enter the neighbouring *Cabaret*, when the lady with the muff arrived, who, turning to my carriage, lifted her veil to read the number. 'This is it,' said I, opening the door. She stepped in, supporting herself on my arm, and looking

around with some perturbation. I asked where I was to drive; she answered in a low voice, 'to the baths of Saint Joseph:' I mounted my box, and we were presently there. Before getting out, the lady, without asking if I had been paid my fare, took a Napoleon from a corner of her handkerchief, in which it had been tied, and bid me make haste and take a crown. I saw she was in a hurry, and of course I took plenty of time to untie my leathern purse, and lamented that I had no change to give her except halfpence. She was on the rack in consequence of the delay. I offered to go and try to get her change in some of the shops. She was now out of all patience, as I had hoped she would, and stepping out of the carriage, exclaimed as she ran on 'keep it all.'—'Many thanks my fair dame, and may another give you as much pleasure as you have afforded me.' It was two o'clock; I placed my coach on the stand, and went to finish my break-

fast at the top of la Rue Mont Martre. On returning to my horses, I found two young girls in my coach, who, with an embarrassed air, told me to take them to Charrier's on the Boulevart of the Temple. When we arrived there, they sent me to the Tennis Court to inquire for Mr. Prosper. He was then engaged in an important game, and had just lost three points, one after the other. He consigned me to the devil with all the usual eloquence of a losing gamester; but after some reflection, told me to inform those who had sent me, that in a few moments he would join them in the Turkish garden. I set them down there, and my fare was again very liberally paid.

"Standing behind my seat, and walking my horses along the Boulevarts, I was counting on my fingers, how much I had already made, when I heard myself called by name from a Grocer's shop. The master's wife had lain-in the day before, and the child was about to be christened.

The coach sent for, was not sufficient to contain the company, and my comrade called me to his assistance; my coach was the handsomest, and I had the honour of carrying to church the attendant, the child, the nurse, the god-father, the god-mother, the husband, and his wife's brother. The witnesses got into the other coach. This fare, of which I shared the profit with my comrade, brought me six francs clear, besides a glass of liquor, which the grocer gave each of us on his counter.

"It was now time for the theatres: while waiting until the Ambigu-Comique should be over, I went to a wine vaults with several other hackney coachmen: we played at cards for our dinner;—I was in luck, and won my share of the reckoning; I had ordered two bottles of wine to treat my comrades, but before they were empty, a little boy came to inform me, that a gentleman and lady having left the theatre before the end of the play, were waiting for me in my

coach. I ran to it; a man's voice answering beforehand to the usual questions, cried through the window, '*I take you by the hour, walk your horses, and go where you please.*' I understood my customer, and behold me drawling my coach towards *la Madalaine, (the Magdalen.)* Opposite the pastry cook's *des Italiens*, I felt myself pulled by my great coat—I stopped—the gentleman got out, gave me a crown, and told me to take back the lady whom he left in the coach to Gaillon-street, No. ——

"There I closed my day's work. It was only ten o'clock, but my pocket was full, and my horses were tired. I went home to my master, and inspecting the inside of my vehicle, I found a gentleman's watch and a pair of lady's gloves: I took them the next day to the prefecture of police, but, thanks to my luck, nobody claimed them."

When the fellow had concluded his story, and drank my health in the last glass

of wine, he offered to carry me home gratis, but I would only consent to go with him, on condition he would accept a *pour boire*, of double the amount of his fare.

No. V.—7th Feb. 1812.

THE DEBTOR'S PRISON.

Happiness, though often crossed by misfortune, is more frequently destroyed by misconduct.

Prior.

Imprisonment for debt is a necessary consequence of the progress, and perhaps of the abuse of civilization. In France, under the two first races of her kings, creditors had no other recourse but to proceed against real property. The President Hainaut, cites the case of Bouchard de Montmorency, who owed a considerable sum to Adam, Abbot of St. Denis. "They could not arrest him," says the

Abbe Suger, "because such was not the usage of that period; but they procured an order from the king, to pillage his lands to satisfy the amount of their claim." In these times of barbarism, the law treated those with ridicule who contracted debts without possessing ability to discharge them, (matters are strangely altered since!) the surrender of their effects, which they were compelled to make, was accompanied by a very singular ceremony. The debtor, gentle or simple, was obliged to salute the earth three times *avec son derrière (nudis clunibus)*, crying at the same time, *I surrender my effects!* Saint-Foix states that they have still at Padua the stone of shame *(lapis vituperii)* on which this punishment was inflicted. I imagine that this custom may be the origin of a similar penitence which is imposed in the little game of *forfeits* upon those who cannot in any other way acquit themselves of their obligations. I do not know whether it is, upon the single authority of the author of

the *Essais sur Paris*, admitted as proven that anterior to the reign of *Louis-le-Jeune*, a debtor might dispense with the payment of his debts, provided he fought with his creditors; in this case, Saint-Foix was a man to confound his particular history with that of the manners of our ancestors; as he paid very ill and fought very often, he was interested in causing it to be believed that a person might substitute the one for the other!

But be that as it may, I remember a time, (so near the present, that there is no reason to think it impossible to be revived) when it was the height of fashion to be in debt;—when it was reckoned more honourable to have creditors than lacqueys in waiting in an antichamber. This vice of a few young men of rank, by insensible degrees, infected all classes in society; but it was reserved for the Englishman, Bielfeld, to exalt it into a principle of political right, to write a book for the express purpose of demonstrating, that na-

tional debt is an irrefragable proof of the prosperity of a state, and thence indisputably deduce, that England is infinitely richer than France.

I never could understand the point, and still less the moral of witticisms upon the subject of debt. It appears to me that these engagements resemble others, and that there is neither spirit nor honour in failing to fulfil them. I am well aware that, by one of those anomalies of which it would not be difficult to find many other examples in our customs, the law, in this instance, condemns what society sanctions; I know that while the courts deal severely with the debtors, the theatres treat the creditors with ridicule, and that it seems to be agreed to laugh in turn at the different parts that are performed in the world, and upon the stage. But the creditors, tired out with fruitless endeavours, and incensed at the endless breach of promises, ultimately conclude with persevering, till they obtain a settlement, in which the debtor, to

obtain new credit, pays at least a part of his debt with the help of the money-lenders. These gentlemen, always well informed of the wants and resources of the young spendthrifts, know better than any other person the value of an acceptance on stamped paper. The gull who falls into their clutches may well repeat,

Des billets tant qu'on veut; point de lettres de change.*

it is only at enormous interest that they obtain discount, and the principal too, is paid them in crowns that have been clipped and sweated far below their standard value. The time passes swiftly, the day of payment arrives, the bill is protested, the writ taken out, and the next day, on his return from riding, as he enters the *Café Tortoni*, one of our dashing fellows, is, without respect for the fashion, invited by a decision

* As many notes as you will, but no bills of exchange.

of the tribunal of commerce, to adjourn to the *Rue de la Clef*, and take up his abode there within the narrow bounds of four walls, till a relenting father, a fond mistress, or a generous friend restore him to his wonted agreeable habits, and by paying his old debts, afford him the means of contracting new ones.

It must be noticed, however, that it becomes every day more difficult than it has hitherto been in Paris, to plunge very deeply into debt. The merchants are less credulous, the mechanics less patient, the money-lenders less numerous, and the courts of justice more rigorous.

I never had any thing to do with a bill in my life; the bare sight of a stamped paper gives me the ague, and I am unacquainted with any idea more frightful than that of a bailiff or an attorney, though I hold them to be the most honest people in the world (and I take witnesses to this declaration); I have never then (the Revolution excepted) had occasion to see prisons

or prisoners, but this has not prevented me from perusing, with a lively interest, the work of the philanthropist Howard.—Arrived at my time of life, without having once crossed the threshold of a gaol, I flattered myself that I should never have occasion to visit these dreary abodes.—I, however, received the following letter.

"Prison of ——, 25th Jan. 1813.

"I would not have addressed you, Sir, if my confinement arose from a cause of which I ought to be ashamed. A hard-hearted creditor has thought proper, in pursuing a bill of exchange, with which I had entrusted him, and which I cannot pay, to obtain and execute a writ against my person, in consequence of which, I am imprisoned till it may please my father to honour my signature. I reckon upon your friendship for persuading him to abridge the lesson which he might otherwise be tempted to give me, and from which I

promise you I shall profit as much as if it were made ever so much longer; come and see me, I beg of you.

"EUGENE DE MERSEUIL."

This letter afflicted more than it surprised me. Eugene is the son of one of my distant relations; his father, an ardent agriculturist, never quits the country, and permits his son to live in Paris with an allowance of 500 francs per month, which he pays him regularly, but which is not, as may readily be believed, enough for a young man fond of keeping horses, and addicted to other extravagances of a still more expensive cast. * * * *** * I have hazarded some advice, but it was ill received. I was affronted, and for six months, until this epistle arrived, had heard nothing of my young relation. I did not hesitate in resolving to answer his letter in person; —I hired a coach, and told the driver to proceed to * * * "Perhaps, Sir, you are going to see some one there."—"Yes,

friend. You know where this prison is?" "Perfectly well; I have been employed during a whole year, and almost every day by a *Guard of Commerce?*"—"And what does this *Guard of Commerce* do?"—"My Master? Oh! he takes people to gaol."—"I understand you; he is a sort of bailiff, who is employed in arrests."—"Exactly; I have seen him in all lights———and if I might depend upon you"———"It must be another time then, friend, for I am in a hurry now."—"I have done," replied our citizen, "I must, however, put you in the right train: have you your permission?"—"Here it is."—"That won't do; you must go and get another at the Prefecture of the Police."—"Drive on then to the Prefecture."

Having got my permission made out according to rule, I pursue my way, and arrive at ———. The coachman draws up before a building, of which the severe architecture, high walls, low gates, and great number of centinels, sufficiently indicated

the destination. The centinel pointed out to me as the principal entrance a gate about four feet in height: I knock; the grating of bolts and of a triple lock is heard; it opens; I enter, and five or six turnkeys, who are drinking and smoking in a sort of dungeon, demand of me, in that amiable tone which is so peculiar to them, "*Where is your authority for coming here?*" I shew them my permission, and the door is speedily shut upon me. I cross many courts, and arrive by several dark passages, the low doors of which open and shut with horrid noise, at the registry, where I describe the object of my visit, and they give me the address of the prisoner. Under the guidance of a door-keeper, I ascend a steep stair leading to long corridors, on both sides of which are ranged the numerous cells that give this place the look of an immense cloister.

The chamber of Eugene was on the third floor; the furniture by no means superb; but with the utmost contempt for superfluity,

it might boast of possessing necessaries. With the exception of the bed, which the gaoler is bound to provide at a stated price, all the moveables (which consisted of two chairs, a stove, a table, a pitcher, and some small utensils) belonged to the *Chum** of my young scape-grace, "who had found it," as he assured us, "more convenient, and, particularly, more economical during the one-and-twenty months he had resided there, to lay in his own furniture, in preference to renting an apartment ready furnished." The two prisoners were at breakfast when I arrived: they insisted upon my sitting down at table with them, and when I betrayed my surprise at the delicacy of a dish which was served up to us, they told me that an excellent cook, who had been ruined in his establishment in the Rue de Clery, had discovered no other means to retrieve his affairs than to procure himself to be shut up in gaol, where, protected

* *Co-Chambriste.*

from creditors and bad customers, he exercised his craft, without paying rent or licence, and certain of acquiring in a few years as much money as would enable him to renew his trade, and be ruined again in the Palais-Royal.

We were still at table when a very comely dame entered upon a visit to the companion of Eugene: although she appeared to me to be more accustomed to *Boudoirs* than to prisons, she had not the air of being altogether unacquainted with this. She informed me that a bell which we heard, was rung to announce the hour when the prisoners were allowed to walk in the garden. Perhaps the young lady had something to communicate in confidence to her friend: I wished also to speak in private with mine, and took advantage of this circumstance to go out with him. We had already taken several turns in a garden sufficiently extensive, and were discussing the best method to employ for the release of the young captive, when a little jockey approached and

presented him with a letter. This contained an invitation to dinner on the same day. I thought he was jesting with me, or that some one was jesting with him; but he very soon convinced me of my mistake.—The person whose invitation he was about to accept, was a Receiver of Public Duties, whom an arrear of some 100,000 francs (for which amount his fortune, in good funds, offered tenfold security) had conducted to this place of safe-keeping, till an Inspector of the Treasury had examined and settled his accounts. Awaiting this event, our philosopher found means to spend a part of his income, and at once to charm and enliven his solitude with agreeable company. Eugene, who perceived that I had not listened with implicit faith to his story, proposed to present me to this Aristippus of prisons. I took him at his word, and we went to pay our respects to M. N——.

He occupied a lodging, consisting of two apartments on the first floor. Furniture in the best taste adorned this small abode, and

draperies, disposed with infinite grace and address about the windows, concealed the villanous-looking bars, which were the only things that could excite the disagreeable idea of a prison. In the first chamber we met some artists distinguished for their pleasing talents, two charming women, and many of those true friends who do not desert you even in your adversity, provided you continue to keep a good table. The dinner (to which I was invited with great politeness) was one of the most agreeable I ever remember. Among the party were prisoners accustomed to the best company, almost all men of wit, whose creditors are probably their butts; a matter which ought in great measure to reconcile the world to folly. I am sorry that my limits do not permit me to sketch some original characters, of which I had time to catch a few leading traits; and, among others, one in particular, a debtor, a prisoner from prudent foresight, who came to spend a *lustre* in gaol, to ensure the peaceful enjoyment of

an income of twenty thousand livres, which his creditors could not legally dispute with him at the period of his enlargement. After dinner we were entertained with music, till the hour when the bell gave the signal for strangers to retire. We took leave of M. N——, for whom I had conceived a good deal of esteem, and in whose case I felt much interested. Eugene conducted me as far as the grated door, where the scene of leave-taking, of which I was a witness, is every evening renewed. The wife, who had passed the day with her husband, the mistress, who had devoted an hour to her lover, the attorney, who had dined with his client, while he contrived with him the best measures for bringing his creditors to terms,—every body spoke at the same time, and it was impossible to hear any thing distinctly, but these words, repeated in chorus: *To-morrow!—I will see you!—You will come again!—You may rely upon me!*—Occupied in listening to the last remarks which my young companion was addressing to me,

I observed a wretched old man who applied for twenty-one sous, the amount of the alimentary allowance which his creditor was obliged to pay him while detained in prison. This poor mechanic, whose history Eugene recounted, was incarcerated for a sum of 240 francs, for which he had been responsible for one of his friends, who became bankrupt. After selling his furniture, he saw himself excluded from every other resource by the absurd obstinacy of an avaricious and foolish creditor, who preferred paying money for his maintenance in gaol, to providing him with the means of discharging his debt by his industry.

At last the bolts were moved, and all the strangers, with their permissions in their hands, were examined, and suffered to pass: the prisoners re-entered, we went out, and the gates were shut with a clashing sound upon them and upon us.

No. VI.—14th March, 1813.

PARIS AT DIFFERENT HOURS.

—— Nil fuit unquam,
Tam dispar sibi.——

Hor. Sat.

Rien de plus variable et de plus bizarre.

Nothing was ever more unlike itself.

One of our most famous painters, who to that superiority of genius which is equal to the grandest compositions, unites a peculiar talent for that species of sketching, which

has been very aptly called the *epigram* of design, mentioned to me some days ago, a project he had formed for executing a series of caricatures after the manner of Hogarth, which should have for their object the development of some moral idea. A first draught which he shewed me, seemed to be as full of point as it was ingenious. In this series of little pictures, which it is intended to denominate *the Contrasts*, the artist proposes to represent the different classes of society in opposition to each other, so as to bring together those, who by their situation, their wants, their tastes, and their pleasures, form among themselves the most complete antitheses, and are consequently the most proper to place before our eyes in a lively manner, the customs, follies, faults, and qualities separately belonging to each.

Leaving him, I ruminated on the use which a moralist observer might make of a similar assemblage, considered in a more general way, and traced in more extended

proportions, and set about arranging this idea in my head as I passed along the Rue de Richelieu at three o'clock in the morning. Recollecting my age, and the season of the year, it might be asked what I was doing at so late, or so early an hour, alone and on foot in the streets of Paris? My answer would embrace a whole history, which would lead me too far from my subject; but which shall be preserved in another place hereafter.

When I reached the corner of the Rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs, I was stopped for a few moments by the concourse of the market carts, laden with vegetables for the Halle, and of carriages going to, or returning from the ball of the Opera. This contrast of pleasure and labour, corresponding in an activity common to the pursuit of objects so different, furnished a hint for arranging the reflections which occurred to me in a regular frame, and suggested the contemplation of this great city in the same manner that astronomers observe the

planets, which they desire to know thoroughly, by watching their phases at different hours. Let us try then to catch the three principal aspects, of morning, noon and night.——

About three o'clock in the morning, Paris is at this time of the year (Jours-gras* excepted) buried in a profound calm. The streets deserted and silent, here and there illuminated with the glimmering rays of the lamps which yet continue to burn, resemble the long galleries of a funeral monument. All are asleep, save the lovers and robbers who roam about in the dark, and sometimes encounter upon the same balcony.

What is this carriage doing at the door of a little hotel in the *Rue de Menars*? Let us see!—Within the purple curtains of a window on the first floor, I perceive a feeble light, and the shadow which moves

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* Jours-gras are the last days of the Carnival.

upon the curtain, demonstrates the presence of a man awake. The coachman, waiting for his master, is walking up and down by the side of his vehicle, wrapt in a dread-nought, and apparently accustomed to these nocturnal promenades; but the horses, servants less docile, beat the ground with impatient feet:—the door opens, a fat man comes out, leaning on the arm of a lacquey: I am at a loss to conjecture who this is, perhaps it is *****. Scarcely has the carriage turned the corner of the street, when a young man, squatted on the angle of a great gate in front, leaps forward, and gives three taps at a low window. The door opens a second time, he enters, and a moment after I see two shadows instead of one upon the betraying curtain.—I pass on homeward, putting up a prayer like a good christian, for the knaves and the dupes.

A few paces further on, I find myself before a fine looking hotel, lighted up as if for a fête. Many gentlemen's carriages

are ranged in the court, and a string of hackney coaches wait at the door. I examine those who come out: some are incensed with their servants, others speak to them with kindness: these laugh loudly as they call a coach, those mutter curses between their teeth as they walk away on foot. I heard them say that the mistress of this house does not do its honours in an equal way to all visitors, that she is blind and capricious; I ask her name; it is *Fortune;* I recognise her palace—it is *le Cercle des Etrangers.* While her favourites depart, their pockets filled with gold, the unlucky, with a lantern and a hooked iron in their hand, dispute the rags to the heaps of dirt which cover them, and search for some pieces of money in the gutter which runs bye.

It is four o'clock, and not yet day. Two shops are being opened, those of a baker and grocer; in the latter, a boy half asleep relumes the counter lamp, and prepares the flasks of peppermint and brandy, which

are to be sold in gills to the hackney coachmen returning to their habitations after watching all night in the service of balls; to workmen who follow the most toilsome and exhausting labours; and to some drunkards who have spent the night in the street, for want of ability to find the way to their lodgings. At the period they open the grocer's shop, the lottery office is shut; yesterday was the closing day—a transparent lamp has pointed it out through the night to persons who during the day might have forgotten this manner of placing, that is to say, of losing their money.

Day dawns, and little milk carts, and mules loaded with vegetables arrive in a row, and cross the enormous diligence which brays the pavement under its weight. Artificers resume their occupations, bustle re-animates every manufactory, and the noise of the anvil pursues to the very inmost apartment of his palace, the rich man who enters it, fatigued with the pleasures of the past night, and already a prey to the cares

of the morrow. All this motion, for the present concentrated in the most populous quarters, does not till several hours after, communicate itself to the site of the Palais-Royal, of the Chaussée d'Antin, and still more slowly to the faubourgs Saint-Germain and Saint-Honoré; but once put in action, with what prodigious activity do the industrious inhabitants of this region of luxury and ease, make up for the lost time? At eight o'clock the whole of the Rue Vivienne is in a state of tranquillity; at ten, a crowd innumerable agitate it, pressing and hurrying in every direction. Brokers come to receive the orders of their principals; *lads of the till* with their enormous bags over their shoulders, and great portfolio at their button-holes, commence their march to collect the receipts of the day. All the jockeys among the lawyers * are in the field, and make their way through a

* *De basoche.*

cloud of busy folks and clerks, who are plodding slowly towards their counting houses, and devising the means by which they may get most quickly away from them.

While mercantile speculations occupy at this hour, the awakened population of the right bank of the Seine, scientific labours are the chief employment of the people on its left bank. The pupils of the lyceums encumber the streets La Harpe and Saint-Jacques; the disciples of Hippocrates, with a Barthes or a Richeraud under their arm, direct their course towards the hospitals, for the purpose of joining example to precept; the gentry of the law, in gowns and robes, seek with hasty steps the den of chicane, turning over as they go, the leaves of a bundle of papers, to have at least the appearance of business; and last of all the learned scholars of the college of France proceed to improve their minds, and form their tastes in the school of Tissot and of Lacratelle.

If one wishes to enjoy a sight less uniform, and perhaps also less instructing, he may journey to the Palais-Royal. About three or four o'clock the courts are filled with a particular class of merchants, or rather of speculators, and the rotunda is invaded by the *Maroons*, who do that which they call their *business*; that is, they lend money on goods at five per cent. per month, or sell for a distant date merchandise of which they are not in possession. Returning by the Rue Vivienne, or by that of Richelieu, you will find the crowd cleared away; the pedestrians ambulate along by the shops, and leave the middle of the street for the brilliant equipages which stop at the doors of the principal warehouses; the young ladies descend to make their purchases, and expect you to believe that they are exceedingly surprised to find, there, young gentlemen of their acquaintance, whom chance has conducted to the same spot. If a ray of the sun brightens the morning, this swarm of glittering flies spreads to the

Tuilleries, or upon the road to the *Bois de Boulogne*, while the fashionables of the second order, the bachelors and idlers of the Chaussée d'Antin, seated on the Boulevart de Coblentz, wait patiently for the dinner hour, in looking at the dances of the little Savoyards.—These children of labour

* Qui de Savoie arrivent tous les ans,
Et dont la main légèrement essuie
Ces longs canaux engorgés par la suie,

gain from their daily toils not only the means of existence, but a fund of emolument, whence economy may save something to carry back to their families. Since a paternal administration has sprung up, if not to eradicate mendicity, at least greatly to diminish this evil, the little sweeps meet together on the boulevarts, and in all the public walks where they discover to their profit the extent of the impost which

* Who came every year from Savoy to sweep chimneys.

professed beggars were in the habit of levying upon the public.

The hour of dinner recalls every person of the *bon ton* to Paris, and while the humble artisan, harassed and fatigued, returns to his family, and eats with an appetite, his sallad of potatoes, or morsel of bacon which frugality has enabled him to purchase, the happy of the day hurl in their coaches to invited dinners, where ennui renders insipid all the dishes which the ablest cooks have seasoned,—the parasites, in black-stockings, reach on tiptoe the house where they think there is a cover placed for them; and more than one adventurer, whose purse is drained, goes to ramble under the piazzas of the Palais-Royal in search of a friend, who will give them an invitation, or lend them money to pay for one of these excellent dinners *at thirty sous* a head, of which they are sometimes reduced to read, *fasting*, the numerous notices with which the pillars are papered.

To this period of bustle succeeds a calm, which is again destroyed at the hour for visiting the spectacles: all the coach entries are thrown open, and the carriages issue forth. The theatres and the coffee-houses are filled.

An hour after the playhouses are over the shops are shut; mechanics, citizens, people of business of every class, retire peacefully to their homes, and abandon the streets of Paris to a nocturnal population, whose manners cannot be observed except by those who watch them, and whom we shall leave in the darkness to which fear or shame confines them.

No. VII.—20th March, 1813.

THE IMPERIAL LIBRARY.

Non desunt crassi quidem qui studiosos a libris deterreant.

ERASMUS.

Nous ne manquans pas d'ignorans qui cherchent à detourner les savans de l'étude.

We are not without persons of presuming ignorance, who would fain turn the studious from their books.

NATIONAL possesses this in common with individual character, that it is very often composed of good qualities or of

defects which it seems to exclude. Thus, for example the Parisians are reproached with being at once simpletons, and void of sensibility. Such house-keeper of the Rue Saint-Denis, as thinks he can never get too quickly to the parapet of a quay, to see a float of wood which descends the river; passes, during forty years, twice or thrice under the fine triumphal arch of Blondel, without bestowing more attention upon it, than upon the Arcade of Colbert; this honest man will attain, like another, his sixtieth year, without knowing more, than that there is in the quarter of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois a great stone building, which they call the *Louvre*, through the court of which, there is a passage which shortens the way to persons who are going from the Palais-Royal to the Rue de Thionville; that at the *Tuileries* there is a grand garden, where one may walk gratis, for which reason he prefers it to Tivoli; that the *Invalides* is distinguished among all the edifices in Paris,

by a dome which is covered all over with gilded lead; but if you state in his presence, that the colonnade of the Louvre is an immortal monument of the genius of Perrault; that the garden of the Tuileries is the source of the reputation of Le Notre; that the interior of the dome of the Invalides, serves as a frame for the superb frescos of Lafosse, and presents the most beautiful effect of perspective which can be wrought by the art of the painter;—if, I repeat, you offer before him any observations of this nature, our worthy citizen will prick up his ears, and every now and then cast a glance at his wife, to endeavour to read in her eyes whether she thinks you are amusing yourself at their expence.

Of all the public monuments of Paris, the most curious, the most interesting, and the least frequented by the immense majority of the population, is incontestibly, the Imperial Library:—that vast depot of human knowledge, that real tower of Babel, where the confusion of tongues prevails, but

in which nevertheless the noblest genius of every nation and age has raised itself to immortality. I am not astonished that such an establishment should only be habitually frequented by the studious, who come to imbibe from this inestimable fountain, the instruction which they could not elsewhere find; but I am always surprised that the sole attraction of curiosity should not occasionally draw to this spot, that crowd of unoccupied people for whom every thing in the capital is *a sight*.

The origin of the Imperial Library, the richest and most magnificent that ever existed, does not reach a date anterior to the fourteenth century. King John is supposed to have been its founder, and it then contained only *fifty* volumes. Charles V. his successor, who superadded a great love of literature to so many other royal virtues, augmented it rapidly to 910 volumes. He provided, that all his subjects might profit by this collection, and caused it to be deposited in one of the towers of the Louvre,

thence called *The Tower of the Library*, under the arched roof of which he ordered thirty little silver lamps to be suspended, so that the learned might pursue their inquiries at all hours, by day or night. The same library now contains three or four hundred thousand volumes; and it will be granted, that if the increase of knowledge is in the slightest degree in proportion to the increase of books, Science ought to have placed us at a greater distance than Time from the age of our ancestors. It is nevertheless very true, that if we were to reduce this immense collection to the small number of books which contain new ideas, useful views, and important truths; that if we were (to the great advantage of taste and good sense) to sell every volume of the ill-digested compilations, of the dogmatical commentaries, of the piles of controversies, of the counterfeits of plagiarists, of the enormous trash of romances, of the terrible mass of would-be-light poetry; it is true, I say, that if we sacrificed these productions,

we might deposit all the library in one of the galleries of the palace which it now fills; but there would be a little exaggeration in maintaining the opinion of my friend, a man of a very cynical nature, that if this purification were resorted to, the Library would not be a whit more voluminous than it was in the time of King John. Not to dwell however on its composition, in which it is obvious enough that the bad so greatly preponderates over the good, as to render it very desirable to exclude the former, if we had the means, still this library is one of those monuments which are a treasure and honour to France. Eighteen monarchs, and the greatest ministers in their different reigns, have devoted their utmost attention to its augmentation; but it was only in 1721 that it assumed a national grandeur and consistency, and was properly endowed in an establishment peculiar to itself, at the ancient *Hotel de Nevers*, afterwards the *Hotel de la Banque Royale*.

This vast edifice, which preserves a fine and tasteful style of architecture in its extreme simplicity, presents no exterior to the *Rue de Richelieu*, except high walls, pierced at considerable distances with plain windows, resembling the principal gate, and destitute of ornament of every kind. Viewed from the court, the appearance of the building, in the form of a parallelogram, is neither deficient in grandeur, nor even in that species of elegance which in architecture results from the general regularity and correspondence of the parts.

Persons who look for conformity in every thing, would remark that the bronze model of the Diana of Houdon, is not suited to the centre of this court, where we might expect to find some allegorical group of an order more severe. A fine staircase leads to the upper rooms, where the printed books and cabinet of medals are kept. We experience something of a religious awe on entering this sort of Pantheon, in which so

many altars are raised to unknown gods.—The most profound silence reigns under the learned roof; it is only broken by the footsteps of the attendants, who traverse the galleries to fetch the books which are asked for, and by the scientific rustling of the *folio* leaves, which ruffle the air as they are turned over by the finger of the reader.

The frequenters of the library are divided into two very distinct classes, the curious and the laborious. The first are easily known. They arrive about one o'clock, enter with a timid air, and seem fearful of making the floors, consecrated to study, creak under their feet. Their unsteady looks glance without stopping from shelf to shelf, filled with books, the bare titles of which it would take them many days to read. They hasten to reach the Eastern gallery, to see the two famous globes of Coronelli, the object of wonder to all country visitors, and the greatest merit of which (being at the same time their greatest incon-

veniency) consists in being about thirty-five feet in circumference.

All the world knows that these globes are a monument of the admiration of the Cardinal d'Etrée for Louis XIV. The inscription on the celestial sphere bears:—that *all the stars of the firmament, and all the planets, are laid down in the position they occupied at the birth of this renowned Monarch**. The inscription on the terrestrial globe informs us that it was constructed *to shew the countries in which so many great actions had been performed to the astonishment of nations which Louis might have reduced to subjection, had not his moderation prescribed limits to his valour*†.

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* Que "*toutes les étoiles du firmament et toutes les planètes y sont placées au lieu même où elles étoient à la naissance de ce fameux monarque.*"

† "*Pour montrer les pays où tant de grandes actions ont été exécutés, à l'etonnement des nations que Louis eût pu soumettre, si la moderation n'eût prescrit des bornes à sa valeur.*"

The French Parnassus, by Titon du Tillet, participates with the globes of Coronelli in the respect and homage paid by provincial amateurs. This monument, of which the design appears to me to be mean, and the execution feeble, is at least placed very conveniently in one of the galleries belonging to this temple of the Muses.

The demeanour of the studious man, who uses the library habitually as his cabinet for pursuing the occupations of learning, is entirely different from that of the persons I have described. Economical of the time which he has it in his power to pass there, he is to be seen in the court at the moment the clock strikes ten. The doors are opened, he mounts the stairs with rapidity, runs across the rooms with the air of one acquainted with the localities, and speedily assumes his accustomed station in the gallery where the librarians sit. The plan of his operations is already digested; he does not hesitate about what book he has to ask for, and often goes to take it

himself from the shelf on which he deposited it yesterday. Seated near a table, upon which he arranges his papers, with his snuff-box open at his elbow, he reads, takes notes, and four whole hours elapse without his having ever raised his eyes to look around at those who are similarly occupied at the same table, or his having discovered that the temperature of the atmosphere is six degrees below zero in this place, where a spark of fire never yet penetrated.

There are here as in other places, and perhaps more here than are elsewhere to be found, originals to be noticed, and coxcombs to observe. What is that person doing all alone at yonder table, in the middle of twenty volumes marked with little slips of written paper,—that man in a light-coloured green coat, who wipes his brow as if he was toiling to excavate the earth or sawing marble? He is compiling, but with much greater ease than the Abbé Trublet: the latter infused the little wit which he possessed into that which he borrowed from

others; but the man in the green coat disburses nothing from his own capital—he trades only on the property of other people. Nobody can plunder with more unblushing impudence, and it might justly be said of him, that *he makes a havoc among good books*. He has published twenty volumes, in accomplishing which he has cut to pieces three or four hundred: and thus qualified he fiercely asserts his title to be considered a man of letters, and is a member of many learned societies.

If I set small value upon this literary manœuvre, I do not estimate one atom more highly that dusty commentator whose critical researches are directed solely to the maintenance of some very absurd paradoxes, by adducing a multitude of quotations, which nobody would be at the trouble of verifying. He is at this moment, to the incalculable glory of learning, finishing a work in four volumes *quarto*, in which he proves that Montaigne is not the author of the *Essays*, and that the translation of Amyot is the

production of Jean de Mauheout. Between these two literary harpies, I observe a writer of ballads, who is engaged in quest of couplets among the enigmas in the old *Mercure*. A little further off is a lady romance writer, who is endeavouring to collect a fund of ideas, of situations, and of characters from Durfé and Scudéri, in order to mix them up together in new romances. At the other end of the table, I perceive two lads daily occupied, by order of their employers, in making extracts from Fréron, Linguet, and Desfontaines; which circumstance may probably account for the periodical re-appearance, as applied to such or such new tragedy or comedy, of particular touches of criticism which were originally levelled at *Mérope*, *la Métromanie*, and other equally distant productions.

I seldom visit the Library without going into the Cabinet of Medals. This magnificent collection, enriched by victory, is at this period the most complete in Europe. The love of order, and the learned research

of the Abbe Barthélemy, followed up by his laborious successors, leaves us nothing more to wish for in the methodical arrangement of so vast a number of medals and engraved stones, except a proof of the real utility, or even of the existence of this numismatical science, with which, I am afraid, we are yet only acquainted by name. I shall be ready to alter my opinion, whenever it shall be shewn to me that a single doubtful point in history has been elucidated by the help or study of medals, during the two hundred years in which a class of our learned men have been exclusively occupied with this branch of archeology. On my last visit, at the moment I entered, two celebrated antiquarians were disputing upon a brass medal, the impression of which being effaced, left the field free for conjectures. One of them maintained that this medal belonged to the third year of the reign of Tiberius, the other held that it had been struck under the reign of Vespasian; a third *savant* unexpectedly dropped in,

and on reference to him, he pronounced that it was a *Spintrienne* medal, representing the amours of Pasiphæ. The debate waxed hot, when a citizen of Salamanca, who was by chance present, having cast his eyes upon the medal, declared that it was a *Spanish Marvedi*.

The apartment in which the manuscripts are deposited, inspires me with peculiar veneration. I never contemplate the numerous parchments with which it is surrounded, without imagining that they possibly envelope the fame of twenty men of genius, who want nothing but the application of a little good fortune, address, or patience, to lead to the discovery of the writing on which their immortality is founded. For a considerable period, a hope of this kind seemed to have taken possession of the world, if we might judge by the number of investigators whom we met in the manuscript room, and who grew pale in the examination of old parchments, from which, after six months labour, they

often gathered no other fruit than the exact knowledge of the era at which some convent of Capuchins was founded, or the date of the earliest privileges of some confraternity of Penitents.

I also generally look into the Cabinet of Prints when I go to the library. I there observe, round a large table covered with green cloth, young artists, who came to study the works of the great masters, and acquire ideas of new composition; and actors engaged to represent some grand personage upon the stage, who are consulting their portraits, in order to copy the costume, which our performers are no longer permitted to disregard, since one of our first tragedians has set the example of a most scrupulous attention to this necessary ingredient of scenic effect.

The last time I visited the Library, I asked a stranger who accompanied me what he thought most interesting. "The Keepers," he replied; "I have seen in the principal cities of Europe, vast collections of

books, of engravings, and of medals, distributed with great order, and arranged with the utmost care in superb galleries open to the public; but in Paris only have I observed men of superior merit, whom the love of letters attaches to all those who cultivate them, and whose indefatigable zeal welcomes, with a benevolence which never leaves them, every one who desires to have the benefit of their scientific assistance: I do not know," added he, "if one could find another establishment in the world, where the Bignon's, the Sallier's, the Sevin's, the Barthélemy's, have been succeeded by the Capronier's, the Van Praat's, the Dacier's, the Langles', and of which we might say, as we can of this, that the principals have always inherited the great talents of their predecessors.

No. VIII.—27th March, 1813.

THE MONEY LENDERS.

Multis occulto crescit res fœnore.

Horace, Ep. 1. l. 1.

Combien de gens s'enrichessent sourdement par l'usure!

How many persons secretly grow rich by usury!

One who has the character of knowing better than any body else, the value, and especially the interest of money, has requested me to write an article against usu-

rers. This reminded me of Harpagon, who sought a celebrated preacher to beg him to preach a sermon on the same subject. "How much am I rejoiced, my brother," said the Christian orator, "to see that heaven has touched your heart, and that you are disposed to renounce."——"That is quite out of the question," interrupted the old Sinner; "if I pray you to thunder from the pulpit against usury, it is because there are in this city, so many little money lenders, who interfere in the trade, that a man like myself can gain nothing to make it worth his attention, and if you, by your sermons could reform *them*, my affairs would be much improved." This man had much too good an opinion of his brethren; it is not by the discourses of a preacher, or the labours of an essayist, that they can be reformed, but by the manners of the people, and the measures of the government. They cannot be corrected by fine sermons, but by good laws. In a great city the means of procuring money ought always to be in

proportion to the facilities afforded for spending it. A man has no sooner emptied his purse, than he must consider by what means he can fill it again, and there are always people to be found ready on certain conditions, to do him this double service. Nothing is more difficult in Paris, than for a man to regulate his wants (among which we must always include his pleasures) by his income. In the crowd of those who can never succeed in establishing this necessary equilibrium, the greater number, for want of credit to open an account with a banking house, are compelled to have recourse to means for raising money, not practised by those worthy merchants, those honest capitalists, who have no idea of lending, or of borrowing money at an annual interest, exceeding four or five per cent. On the other hand, however, as these gentlemen who revolt at the idea of usury, cannot think of placing out their money but on real property, on which they have the first mortgage, or on bills

endorsed with three good names, and payable at the bank of France, it has therefore become necessary for a long time, to tolerate bankers less scrupulous, who will step forward to the assistance of young persons of family, whose affairs are a little deranged; of persons from the country whose rents are not yet due; of advocates who are living on the expected *gains* of a law-suit; of gamesters certain of repairing their losses by a better calculated chance; of collateral heirs, eager to eat an inheritance, to which it is very doubtful they will ever succeed; of people who consider their debts for the most part, as matters unconnected with their revenues; of the unfortunate of all classes, to whom bankruptcy, sickness, or unforeseen reverses, have left no alternative;—in a word, of all those who have great desires, numerous wants, and small resources. All these different classes of borrowers have their analogies among the money lenders—the most rare of which are friends, whose purses are always open,

and who seldom fail to lose their friend with their money,—too happy if they are not requited with marked ingratitude. After this noble exception, which has nothing in common with the rule, comes the class of licensed money lenders, of whom we have little to say, either good or bad; and finally, the usurers who are modified in a thousand ways, who appear under twenty characters, and under twenty different descriptions, from the man of business *(faiseur d'affaires)* to the petty pawnbroker *(preteur a la petite Semaine.)* As a true painter of manners, who does not apply the eulogy or reproach to one epoch, which belongs to another, I ought to state, that within the last twelve or fifteen years the evils of usury have been considerably diminished. This happy result is caused by the re-establishment of "Mount Piety," an institution truly worthy of the name which it received from Pope Leo X., who is said to have been its founder. This branch of the Administration of benevolent In-

stitutions, which, at the present day is directed with equal economy and wisdom, is not the least benefit for which we are indebted to a paternal government, whose solicitude extends to every want of the poor. It is owing to the new organization of *Mount Piety*, that all the lombards* have disappeared; all those houses for lending money, not recognised by authority, where there was no guarantee for the security of property. It is a very moral and a very philanthropic idea, to appropriate to the support of hospitals, the produce of an establishment, the profits of which, in the first instance, flow from distress or from misconduct.

I should have been not a little embarrassed, had questions been put to me within the last fortnight, with respect to the establishment of *Mount Piety*, which I am now competent to answer.

The information so recently acquired, originated in the following circumstance:

* Pawnbrokers.

The father of a young student at law, whom I have already brought twice before my readers, sent to me lately, a duplicate *(une reconnaisance)* of Mount Piety, the first I remember to have seen, with a request that I would redeem the watch, in acknowledgment of which it had been given. The letter of my old friend informed me that this watch was an heir loom, precious for its antiquity, having within a century and a half passed from fob to fob, by inheritance, from his great grandfather to his son, by whom it had been pledged for a hundred and fifty francs a few days before he left Paris.

I attended at the place named in the ticket. A transparent lantern inscribed in large letters, "Commissioner of Mount Piety," directed me to the office where I had to transact the business on which I went. The entrance was not grand; an obscure passage conducted me to a narrow staircase, where a crowd of persons

ascending and descending the stairs, elbowed each other as they strove, with much embarrassment in their countenances, to escape the observation of their neighbours. I got forward slowly, so that I had time to ask myself, what could be the reasons which attached a sort of shame to an action so very innocent in itself as going to borrow on our own property, a sum demanded for a moment of exigency; and of answering the question—that it arose from the tacit avowal of poverty, which seemed to be made by resorting to such an expedient.

I entered the office where many persons were waiting for their turn, and took my place among them. Having seated myself in a corner, my spectacles on my nose, and my chin supported by my cane, I commenced my course of observations. The first thing I noticed, was a very distinctly marked difference, which divided the people around me into two classes. Some (these were the smallest number) had a

laughing air, spoke loud, and were out of patience at the slowness of the clerks, and looked at their neighbours with an expression of countenance, in which pity borrowed something from contempt: others with embarrassed looks, and humble demeanour, waited without, murmuring till their turn came; told their business in a low tone, signed their names with uneasiness, and gave their address with reluctance. It required little penetration to discover that the former came to reclaim, and the latter to pledge their effects.

The last days of the carnival were not over; the crowd to this house was considerable, and the office-keeper, who had engaged an extra clerk, had much difculty to satisfy the multitude of borrowers who appeared. From some expressions which escaped him, I judged that the eves of festivals, and the drawing of the lottery, were for him and his colleagues days of extraordinary business, and that the demand for money for purposes of

amusement, was more common and more pressing in a great city, than the necessity for procuring it to meet the first wants of life.

I remarked a young *femme de chambre*, who came in the name of her mistress to pledge twelve chemises of cambric, of which the extreme fineness, gave one less the idea of any thing woven, than of a cloud or light vapour. The art of the most skilful sempstresses had been exhausted to adorn them, and to embroider them in different patterns. She wanted ten louis on these; they offered her four.—She descanted on the smallness of the sum, and on the great value of the offered security; and wished to have at least one hundred and forty francs, which she said were indispensably necessary to her mistress for the purchase of a helmet-hat, which M^lle. Despaux would neither let her have on credit, nor sell at a lower price. This reason did not even make the office-keeper smile, and M^lle.

Marton was obliged to take from her neck, with some anger, a gold chain to complete the deposit, and obtain the sum which was *indispensable*.

After the *soubrette* came a fat woman, who asked for twelve francs on the counterpane of a bed. I was becoming deeply affected at the hard fate of this poor creature, whom I supposed to be reduced to the necessity of unfurnishing her own bed at the most rigorous season of the year, to solace an infirm husband, or administer to the wants of her sick children. Prompted by a feeling of humanity, I had already opened my purse with the intention of presenting her with the small sum, of which she appeared to stand in need, when I heard her make to a neighbour, an avowal of that which she herself called her *weakness*. Her daughter was invited for the following day to a superb masked ball, in the street *des Vieilles Audrietts*; and she wanted a dozen francs to hire a dress, that she might

go in character—her father would not give her the sum necessary, and she was therefore obliged to borrow it unknown to him. I was not perhaps so much touched as I ought to have been with this trait of maternal affection, and I returned my purse into my pocket, with more *sang froid* than I could boast when I pulled it out.

As this woman left the office, a young man entered precipitately, and without troubling himself too much to inquire if it was his turn or not, deposited on the table a very beautiful repeating watch, and demanded fifteen louis. They counted down the sum, and he went out without giving them his address, of which he said they would have little need, as he was going to the neighbouring gaming house, and would return in an hour to redeem it. The office-keeper appeared so little convinced of his punctuality, that he gave the watch to his clerk to be put with those deposits, which were to be sent on the following morning to the *Grand Bureau.*

An aged female of very respectable appearance, succeeded the gamester, and drew slowly from a large work-bag, a diamond cross, *a la Jeannett*, from which she seemed to part with much pain. While this jewel underwent the examination of the expert valuer, the good dame informed us that she had been ruined by a bankruptcy; that after having been five and thirty years house-keeper to the Duke of **** she had placed the fruits of her economy in a house, which was then thought very safe to the morning of the day on which it was discovered, that the principal was on his way to the United States of America, where he had realized his capital, leaving at Paris a house, of which the value was more than absorbed by the marriage portion of his wife, who had brought him nothing but debts. The old lady had sold in succession all her moveables; she had nothing left but the cross she had brought, which her dying mistress had left to her by will, and which

she now sought to pledge, to procure an admission into the Housewives' Hospital, "*l'Hospice des Ménages.*" Men are naturally good; the fifteen or twenty persons who heard the history of this poor woman, listened to it with great interest, and by chance it so happened, that there were those present, who were able to lend her the money she wanted, and to leave her valued pledge in her own keeping.

My turn came; I presented my duplicate. They desired me to return on the morrow. I inquired the cause of the delay, of which I had seen no other example: they informed me, that the object reclaimed by me, must be returned to them from the *Grand Bureau*, or I might go there myself for it, taking the *grand duplicate*. This offered me an opportunity of seeing an establishment, of which as yet, I knew only one of the appendages. I went through the usual formalities, and took my way to the street des "*Blancs-Manteaux*," where the

administration of Mount Piety has established its seat and general magazine.

The grandeur of the building; its vast offices, the activity and bustle there observable, give at first sight an idea of the importance of such an establishment. Great store-rooms occupy all the first story, and the pledges of every sort are there arranged in admirable order. An immense hall, so constructed as to avoid all disorder and confusion, is open to the crowd of borrowers, who, with their bundles under their arms, sometimes wait a whole day before the number which they receive on entering, is called over. It is not uncommon to see two or three hundred persons assembled in this hall; most of them belonging to the lower classes of society, as the chief office seldom receives at first hand, laces, jewels, shawls; the gew-gaws of luxury, those ruinous superfluities, which possess no value any where, but among the persons who use them. It is by means of

agents, that people of that sort communicate with the office, and it is to the discretion of these go-betweens, that extravagance, dissipation, and vanity, confide the secret of their necessities.

The number which had fallen to my lot afforded me no hope of being despatched with the family watch before the close of the day; I therefore gave up my pursuit and resolved to return another day at better time. A clerk who saw me quitting the place, begged me not to take the trouble of calling on a Saturday, a day on which a multitude thronged the office to obtain money for the pleasures of the following day; and with equal care to avoid the Monday, a day, which the same people devote to replace by fresh pledges, the foolish waste of the day before. This observation, which I had already heard in other words at the commissioners, might well become the foundation for some very serious reflections, but those who are interested in them, have

already considered the evil, and those who are not, would hardly lose their time in the perusal.

No. IX.—3d. April, 1813.

HISTORY OF A JOCKEY.

In veterem fato revoluta figuram.

Virg.

Rendu par le hasard à sa forme premiere.

Women of the least virtue, make the best of prudes.

Warton.

Before you were born, my dear readers, (or at least, the greater portion of you), I used sometimes to pass my evenings at the

house of Mademoiselle Arnould, who was at that time in the bloom of beauty, and the zenith of her talent. A most fascinating party regularly assembled there twice a week—God rest their souls in the other world, where by this time they are nearly all re-united. Geliotte was among the number of these agreeable companions, and I recollect he used often to speak of an actor, who, in the course of his theatrical career, had successively played in the same Opera (Les Têtes de l'Olympe) the character of Cupid, of Mars, of Jupiter, of Charon, and of Saturn. It is the same in every situation of life, where, without quitting their original sphere of action, men change their employments in proportion as they advance in years. Thus, a little boy, whom in my youth I remember to have seen as a jockey, after being in succession a groom, a lacquey, and a valet de chambre, is at this day a porter in the same hotel. He commenced his life in the stable; he is finishing it in the lodge. Thus far, there is nothing very ex-

traordinary, but if by chance he had been born under a splendid canopy on the first floor, upon one of those antique beds, fashioned by the hand of Jacob, and which might be taken for the bark of Cleopatra, could one help feeling surprise at finding him in the mansion of his birth, clothed in a little blue vest with red shoulder knots, and an English jockey cap on his head? A wonder of this kind belongs to the number of those which I have experienced in the course of my life.

Some ten or twelve years ago, returning with a party from the chace, I was conducted to the Chateau de ———, the residence of a very young married lady, who will not be known by others, though she may recognise herself under the name of *Merange*, which I shall give her here, and which has no reference to her real name. It were no easy task to find a prettier woman than she was then, or indeed than she is now. The charms which grace and beauty spread around her, could not long conceal

from a man of my age and observation, that with much address, she absolutely wanted sense, and that under a deportment reserved even to prudery, she concealed a wanton heart, lively passions, and equivocal conduct.

Among the domestics in this opulent mansion, there was a Jockey at most ten or eleven years old, of a person more remarkable than handsome, for whom M. de Merange, though otherwise an excellent master, evinced a feeling of antipathy, the more extraordinary as this boy appeared to possess qualities superior to his age and station. He was attached to the personal service of an old lady, who said she had brought him from England, and who in proof of this, called him *James*, by which name this boy was commonly known. I know not with what intention, or through what absence of mind it occurred, but one morning while at breakfast, my eyes wandered alternatively from Madame Merange to the jockey, and from the jockey to Ma-

dame Merange. She caught my glance on its passage, and I thought I could discover, in spite of the precaution she took to conceal it with her hand, that a blush unusually deep suffused her pretty face. The evening before, I had innocently questioned one of the maids about the relations of little *James;* and the only answer I obtained was a malicious smile. These circumstances excited strange suspicions in my mind, which however were presently effaced, and effaced the sooner, as I had no interest in their confirmation.

One day last month, on leaving the baths of Tivoli, a young man apparently sixteen or seventeen years of age accosted me, and desired my services to help him to a place. It was necessary for him to name Madame Merange before I could recognize in him, the little jockey I had seen eight years before at the Chateau de ———. I was quite willing to render him any assistance in my power; but in the first instance desired to know for what reasons he had quitted his

former mistress, as also what had since befallen him. I gave him my address, and directed him to come to me on the following morning. He was exact in keeping the appointment. Several certificates, of which he was the bearer, and which he desired me to read, bore testimony to his good conduct, but none explained the reasons which had so often compelled him to change his situation. I wished to be fully informed to what this was to be ascribed, and as he expressed himself in good terms, and with much ease, I called upon him to recount his history:—the adventures of a Jockey might besides furnish some of those observations on manners, for which one is frequently compelled to trust to the eyes of others.—I shall here let him speak for himself.

"Some weeks after you had quitted the Chateau, Madame Dobson, (the old lady mentioned before) called me one morning, and informed me from my master, that I must seek my fortune elsewhere. This

compliment did not astonish me; I had been prepared for it a long time, and the aversion which my master had conceived against me, caused me to feel my dismissal less sensibly. I asked to see my mistress; this favour was however denied me, but they gave me from her, a little portmanteau, tolerably well furnished, a leathern purse containing fifteen louis in gold, the whole being accompanied with an express prohibition, from ever again appearing before those whom I was now about to quit. I left this house, in which I had lived from my earliest years, without regretting a single person, though I trust my heart is not deficient in feeling. The only friend, the only acquaintance I had upon earth, was a poor countrywoman, who came to see me two or three times a year at the Chateau, who called me from kindness her son. I should have directed my steps towards her abode, but I knew not where she lived, and they refused to tell me. Thus circumstanced, I set out for Paris, and chance

ordered it so, that I should meet in the carriage, in which I took a place, an officer who offered to engage me to attend him in Spain, and the next day I was with him and his lady on the way to Madrid. He left her in that city with an old and trusty servant, and taking me with him, hastened to join the army, which was advancing from the side of Toledo. His evil star, or rather mine, decreed that this brave man who had already become much attached to me, should lose his life at Val de Penas. I returned to Madrid to carry these sad tidings to his wife, who, retaining me in her service, set out immediately for France. I should probably have been with her still, if my inconsolable mistress had not met with the Captain of an American vessel at Bourdeaux, who found means to persuade her, that the best remedy for sorrow, was travelling. She resolved to make a voyage with him to New York, and as the Captain perceived that my presence perpetually recalled to the memory of the amiable widow, the loss she

had sustained, he judged it expedient to set sail without me.

I was again fortunate enough to find a master, some days after, in a young *Bordelais* heir, who was about to proceed to Paris to be put in possession of a rich inheritance. He conceived that a Parisian Jockey would give a certain eclat to his entrée into the capital. We set off, and had no sooner reached Paris, than my master was put in possession of his real estates, which he transformed very promptly into a disposeable capital of 230,000 francs, and with the assistance of some male and female friends, as well as of tavern-keepers, tailors, gaming houses, and horse dealers, got rid of it in less than three years. The first retrenchment he thought of making, took place in his stable. From that time I considered him a lost man, and judged it was time for me to make an honourable retreat. To his horses he owed much of his importance—he no sooner appeared on foot, than doubts arose as to the situation of his affairs. The

alarm spread far and wide among his creditors, and those who would never have arrested him in his carriage, or on horseback, felt no difficulty in making so free with a pedestrian, as to execute the warrant for his caption, of which they were the bearers.

With the cabriolet, and last horse of M. de Flavignac, who left me in possession of his livery for the payment of my wages, I passed into the service of a man, who let out carriages to hire. My smart jacket of sky blue, my scarlet collar trimmed with silver lace, and my buckskin small-clothes, gave me the air of a Jockey belonging to a great house; and I was very successful in my new condition. If a party was made for Ranelagh, for Mouceaux, for Rincy, little James was always the driver in request, and if ever I write my memoirs, this part of my life will neither be the least scandalous nor the least amusing.

I nevertheless soon tired of this unsettled life, and engaged myself to a celebrated stock jobber, who established his household

upon a grand scale. My occupations were entirely changed; my master spent the morning at Tortonis, where he transacted business while eating shell-fish with champignons, speculating upon the rise and fall of the funds, and playing at billiards. From two till five o'clock I went, according to his orders, and waited with the cabriolet, in the court of the Palais-Royal, to make it be believed that he was to be found regularly upon 'Change. The consequence of this course of operations was, that he one fine day was taken up by a post chaise at the door of the coffee-house where he kept his office, having charged me with the task of treating with his creditors, and informing them that they might take possession of his house, which he had abandoned to them, all furnished, as it stood.

One of the syndicks appointed to receive my accounts, which, as you may believe, were very soon made up, appropriated the cabriolet to himself, at the request of his wife, who also desired that I might be

transferred as a part of the equipage. I relinquished my little jacket, to put on a great coat with a large cape, and for many months had nothing else to do but to drive my mistress from her house in the Rue-Neuve-des-Petits-Champs, to the Ecole-Militaire, where she had a cousin, a lieutenant of hussars, who had been wounded, and in whose recovery she took the most lively interest. Her husband, possessed of much less feeling, formed an unfavourable opinion of an anxiety so natural; and in order to suppress the visits, devised no better scheme than to suppress the cabriolet.

On leaving this house, I entered into the service of a man who fills a station, to which no name has yet been given, but which is not on that account the less useful and lucrative. This master, whom I must quit to save myself from being starved to death, an event, which in the way he feeds me cannot be long delayed) is the mysterious intendant, the confident adviser of all the women, *comme il faut*, in the capital,

who have secret business to transact of whatever nature it may be. His cabriolet, behind which, to tell the simple truth, I am a fixed post, does not rest two hours in the day; we run incessantly from the faubourg Saint-Germain to the Chausée-d'-Antin, from the Chaussée-d'-Antin to the faubourg Saint-Honoré, and I do not think that there is an accoucheur in Paris, whose bell is troubled oftener than ours. Such, Sir, is my present condition, to escape from which, I beg your assistance."

While listening to this young man, whose figure and tone of voice renewed the ancient suspicions in my mind, I fell into a profound reverie. I took his address however, and promised him that he should shortly hear from me. My first measure, had for its object, to discover the abode of the country-woman, of whom James had spoken, and who came to see him sometimes at the *Chateau de* ****. I learned that she lived at Brévane. Thither I went, and obtained from this person incontestable proof

that poor James, whom she had suckled, was the son of Madame de Merange, and that he had the misfortune to be born during an absence of two years, from his wife of the husband of his mother. Well provided with all the memorials which the nurse could procure for me, (of which the most important informed me of the name of James' father, whom I formerly knew, and who died a year after the birth of this child) I waited upon Madame de Merange at a time when her husband was from home. I explained to her the cause of my visit, and endeavoured to revive the feelings of nature, by shewing her that it was possible to reconcile their indulgence with the duties of a wife, and the preservation of a character. Thinking me less instructed than I really was, she at first assumed the tone of insulted virtue; but when I mentioned the names of the nurse and father of the boy, and told her that I held in my hands the written proofs of the facts, with which, her son, with my advice

might one day arm himself against her, the lady put an end to this conversation, more painful to her self-love than to her sensibility, by requesting permission to send to me a confidential man, whom she would authorize to settle *this disagreeable affair*.

Next day, I was visited by a person of fine spirit, very delicate, and one who seemed to be well versed in matters of this kind. "I do not meddle with affairs of gallantry," said he, "but when they threaten a discovery; and, thank heaven, I never have any thing to say to love, till it begins to listen to reason." Madame de Merange, he continued, "belongs to that small number of women, who, upon this point, entertain the most correct notions, and whose passions do not affect their judgment. She soon perceived that to be happy during life, a woman has need of great consideration; that happiness may be more certainly obtained by clever management, than by conduct free from reproach, and that there is not the slightest degree of difference between

concealment and modesty." After the avowal of these principles, I thought it unnecessary to treat the matter with any other arguments than such as might have an effect upon people influenced by similar morals, and at the end of a long debate, I obtained for my *Protégé*, a pension of two thousand francs secured upon the estate. Nothing remained to be done, except to go to the notary and execute the deed, for which purpose it was requisite that the young man should be present. My servant was not in the way; the lady's agent, whose cabriolet was in my court, offered to send his *jockey* for the person whom we wanted: he was called, he came up; and imagine our surprise, when we found that this *jockey* was no other being than James himself, who was no less astonished than we were, when informed of the change about to take place in his condition. Without being acquainted with the source of his little fortune, he has already shewn himself worthy of the advantage, by the use

which he makes of it, and by the eagerness he has displayed so to employ it, as to be enabled even to distinguish himself in an honourable profession.

No. X.—10th April, 1813.

THE FLOWER-MARKET.

..... Animum picturâ pascit inani.
VIRG. EN. I. V. 463.

.....Ils se contentent d'un vain simulacre.

Pleased themselves with a foolish fancy.

WOMEN have good cause to be headstrong in the country in which we live, for they know nothing, and are never taught what they ought to know. Alive to the endless satires upon the frivolity of their tastes, during the minority of Louis XIV., have

they essayed a higher flight, and devoted themselves to the study of the sciences and literature? Moliere set the example of decrying them as *learned ladies!* as *Blue-Stockings* of the Hotel Rambouillet.* To surmount this ridicule, have they endeavoured to combine different pursuits, to transform their boudoirs into cabinets, to appear at the levees of ministers? Their cares have been described as plots, and their reputation for intrigue has been every-where confirmed. At the period when I made my appearance in this world, women had given into a mixed course, which at least established a sort of balance between those who censured and those who panegyrized them. They mingled fondness for dress with attention to science; they frequented the Queen's court and the King's garden; they attend a lecture of Le Sage in the morning, and a masked ball in the evening;

* Precieuses.

they canvassed for a place at an Academic Sitting with the same eagerness as a box for a first appearance of *Nicolet*. At an epoch more recent to the date at which I write, our ladies rendezvoused at the Atheneum and the College de France. I have witnessed their enthusiasm for experimental philosophy, and seen them assemble at Mitouards to make experiments on gases: the most learned were anxious to turn the properties of chemistry to their use; the phenomena of electricity and animal magnetism, by means of which ladies were enabled to explain to their husbands the cause of their vapours and the disorders of their nervous system, next attracted their attention, and only gave way to the passion for botany, which J. J. Rousseau had the good fortune to develope in their nature. A chapter of Emilius made the *perriwinkle** all the fashion! Not a woman but had

* *La Pervenche*, a plant with leaves resembling a laurel, but smaller.

upon the chimney of her bed-room a plant of this kind, in a Sevres vase of a peculiar shape, on which was to be seen the portrait of the Philosoper of Geneva.

This mania was carried to such a pitch, that a nurseryman of Montreuil accumulated from that source the brilliant fortune with which he scandalized Paris for forty years. Since however the mind, like the heart of woman, must after all enjoy some exclusive taste, the study of plants and flowers is one which may be pursued with propriety. The botany of boudoirs is an *inoffensive* science, and the luxury of flowers is more agreeable and less ruinous than that of bronzes and china. I am more pleased to see upon a chimney vases of jassmines and roses, the bloom of which charms the eye while their perfume delights the sense, than urns of alabaster without meaning and without use. Gardeners decorate a saloon much better than gaming tables, and stands of orange, laurel, and myrtle, ranged on a balcony, form

a verdant curtain, which hides more agreeably than silk the black wall of a butcher, which the finest habitations are sometimes doomed to have situated within the range of their perspective.

The taste for flowers is not confined to one sex or to any particular class; it is now general. The gilded saloons of the Chaussée-d'Antin are almost green-houses for the collection of plants and shrubs of the highest price: the shops of the merchants in the city are decorated with boxes of pomme-granates and myrtles: the work-shop of the artisan in the faubourg cannot do without some pots of rosemary and sweet-basil; and the cultivation of monkshood is the most important business of the little lodger in the Marais. To him alone belongs the task of rearing at his window the arbour-work and brass wire bent into arches, round which twines and displays itself in a manner so picturesque that plant, whose verdure adorns his dwelling, and whose purple flowers em-

bellish so finely the sallad with which he every Sunday treats his family.

Among the French it rarely happens that a taste for any thing is not carried to such an extent as to become a folly; such is that rage for foreign plants, on which it is impossible even for ridicule to do justice.—There is not the poorest proprietor of the smallest country-house, but must have his green-house and his collection of *exotics*, and who does not set apart for this purpose a low apartment, heated by the tunnel of the eating-room stove, where he gets together, at great expence, a parcel of vegetables which he cannot raise, and the names of which he with the utmost difficulty remembers. His basin of six feet in diameter is filled with rushes, which he calls his *acquatick* plants, two borders are reserved for the *lillyaceous* tribe; an alley to the north, one side of which is formed by a wall, contains his *hepaticas*, and to complete the caricature, tickets of tin stuck into the earth

in the kitchen-garden designate *cibol* and *parsley*, under the appellations of *cepa fissils* and *petroselinum*.

This botanical rage has multiplied the race of gardeners and nurserymen in the faubourgs of Paris, where able cultivators settle, and on a few acres of land rear the shrubs and plants of every climate. These vast magazines of vegetation supply the flower-market.

This market, the least useful and the most agreeable of all others, in virtue of this double title, enjoys the sole privilege of being frequented by the opulent class. All the female sex, without excepting those of the highest rank, come here themselves to make their purchases. This vegetable fair was held in former times on the Quay *de la Ferraille*, where good order was no less aggrieved than good taste, by seeing stalls of old iron and stalls covered with vases of flowers jumbled together, and by meeting recruiting-parties when you were looking for nosegay-girls. Among the number of

improvements, of embellishments of every kind which have been carried into effect within the last twelve years, the flower-market has not been forgotten. The extent of the Quay *de l'Horloge* had been for a long period confined by a pile of houses, the most modern of which perhaps was erected in the twelfth century. These unseemly and paltry buildings and those of the Pont Saint-Michel, were the only remains of barbarism still visible in this capital, which is the admiration of Europe for the splendour of its edifices; a few months was sufficient for their disappearance.—These ruins made way for a superb quay, crowned with the name of a hero. It is there, upon the Quay *Desaix*, in the centre of a spacious area, bordered with trees and decorated with two fountains, that the flower-market (of which a very imperfect idea will be formed, if visited on any day but Saturday) is now established. At day-break the carts of the nursery men arrive in long files, and direct their course towards

the southern side of the Pont-au-Change. There they deposit those pots filled with decayed bark and chalk, in which the most sickly plants acquire an appearance of freshness and vigour well calculated to seduce purchasers, who are not aware, that in less than eight days, the object of their choice, destroyed by a forced increase of vegetation, will become withered to the very stalk, and perish. In this place, as in every other, there are a variety of ranks and distinctions, which are not easy to be accounted for on the score of reason, utility, or merit. Noble flowers, separated from the vulgar, flourish on stands set apart for them, and are not more remarkable for that circumstance than for their scientific name inscribed upon the pot where they grow.

Every succeeding year robs one flower of the fashion which it bestows upon another. Each experiences in turn the *Hortensian* fate, and after having formed the delight of the boudoir and honour of the saloon, is reduced to deck the stall of

the sausage-vender or the window of the sempstress. The disgrace of the superb *Datara Arborea* is not the least striking of these reverses: we have seen it for some time decorate the peristyles of palaces and the vestibules and staircases of noble houses; banished from these places by the *Mode*, and excluded even by its qualities from that asylum which, with a growth less majestic and a perfume less powerful, it might have found in the abodes of the middle class, it has been condemned to vegetate at the bottom of the orangery, or in the corner of the court-yard. A moral might be extracted from this subject.

The earlier part of the morning is devoted to the sale of common flowers. The baskets of the sellers are only filled with lilies, roses, pots of reseda and of gilly-flower, which are destined to replace upon the chimneys and stands of the citizens of Paris, the blue-glass bottles in which, with the help of water and time, they had reared some stalks of narcissus and hyacinths, equally wretched in form and colour.

About noon however the Flower-Market shines in full splendour. At that period it is visited by the most elegant women in charming undress, where the art of the toilet is concealed under the veil of simplicity. A hat of Italian straw adorned with a bouquet of violets, a robe of silk, tan-coloured kid buskins, a yellow or blue shawl thrown over the left arm; such is the sort of uniform which our fair sex appear to have adopted for their lounge to the Flower-Market. The horses are yoked to the calash; and the coachman and footman, in plain riding-coats, give the equipage that air of negligence which the *bon ton* demands. The lady seats herself in the carriage accompanied by her most intimate friend; they traverse Paris, admiring the works of the Louvre, the quays, the obelisk on the Pont-neuf, and are astonished at their being unacquainted with a quarter through which they drive in the night-time once or twice a week in going to the *Bouffons*.

The carriage stops at the end of the Pont-au-Change, and takes its station in the file of those which have already drawn up. They enter the market, and the first person they meet with an appearance of the utmost surprise, is almost always the person whom they would have been extremely surprised not to have met.

As for me, I march from stand to stand, and endeavour from my observation on persons and the flowers they buy, to divine the use to which they intend to put them.

There, a very young and very pretty girl, under the conduct of her governess, is purchasing two little orange trees. She measures the size of the tubs in which they grow with a ribbon. I would wager that she is preparing for the birth-day of a grand-papa, and is desirous of ascertaining whether these boxes are not too large for the window of the chamber where she wishes them to be placed.

Here, there is a lady buying an enormous

laurel-rose*, which she may lay at the feet of an immortal. It seems to me that this compliment is intended for some dramatic poet, who will not fail to see in it the triple emblem of his immortality, his glory, and his love.

At a distance more remote, I observe a little man, pale, shrivelled, and thin, whose body is supported on two limbs the most frail with which mortal man was ever provided. He has cleared the market of its finest flowers. To learn their destination, I did not care to listen to the address which he gave to three of the porters, to whom he entrusted these treasures of the spring; but there is nothing of envy in my calling on him to remember, that if there are flowers for every season, there are follies which are *not* suited for every age!

I am still laughing at the surprise of an honest citizen, who priced a white rose

* An evergreen, the foliage of which resembles the laurel, and its flowers roses.

which he wanted, as he said, to present to his wife on her birth-day, and for which they asked eighteen francs. He exclaimed aloud at this demand, "And that other?" said he, pointing with his finger to a second plant. "Two thousand six hundred livres," replied the florist. The citizen, who thought they were mocking him, fell into a passion, and accused the merchant of insolence; the latter retorted, and called him fool; the quarrel became furious, and I do not know how it might have terminated, if I had not taken the trouble to explain to this worthy Parisian, that what he mistook for white roses was the double-flowered *Kamelia Japonica*, for which an individual had within the last two years paid four thousand guineas in England*. To complete his conviction on this head, a lady whom I should recognise by her queen-like

* The follies of England never escape from French pens without a due portion of exaggeration.—*Tr.*

demeanour, gestures, and voice, bought the precious shrub at the price asked by the gardener, and had it carried in triumph to her carriage by a servant, who made his way with difficulty through the crowd of gazers, impressed with admiration of a plant so dear.

Before leaving the Flower-Market, I wished to complete a collection of tulip bulbs, which I had a commission to purchase; but the nurseryman to whom I addressed myself, referred me to the celebrated Tripet, to that prince of the lilyaceous tribe, whose garden in the grand alley of Chaillot, is at this time the resort of all the true amateurs, who may there behold three thousand seven hundred and thirty-seven sorts of tulips, and of bulbs of every kind.

No. XI.—1st May, 1813.

THE MORNING OCCUPATIONS OF A PRETTY WOMAN.

Formosis levitas semper amica fuit.

PROPER. Eleg. 13. lib. 2.

La légèreté a toujours été l'apanage d'une jolie femme.

Levity has always been the appendage of a pretty woman.

I EVERY day hear complaints of old age, yet see every one anxious to arrive at it. This my brother mortals is one of your con-

tradictions. The same cause produces two different effects; you love life, and you dread old age, which announces its termination; you are on the road, you know the end of your journey, and for this reason you wish to take the longest way. The wisest plan would be to make an arrangement with the seasons of life, similar to that which we make to accommodate ourselves to the varying seasons of the year, and only to bear in mind the inconveniencies of the period we are quitting, and the pleasures of that upon which we are about to enter. When we grow old, we should consider that we have an advantage over young people to the extent of the difference of years by which we are separated from them, since it is certain that the old man has lived over such a period, but doubtful whether this will ever be accomplished by the young man. It should be a study to learn to grow old. This art we should labour to acquire on pain of being one day insupportable or ridiculous—insupportable, if following the ex-

ample of Valmont and ceaselessly meditating on pleasures, which we can taste no more, we annoy others, with our regret, our chagrin, and our privations; ridiculous, if by a course more peculiar to the age in which we live, we are, like Dercourt, seized with the mania of attempting to cling to youth, and excite risibility by the unavailing struggles we maintain against Time, who advances to drag us away. I do not intend to write after the manner of Cicero, an essay on old age, but I will proclaim it as a precept supported by long experience, that to be content in this stage of life, we must not arrive at it all at once. I have wished to prepare myself some time in advance, as I have in autumn been accustomed to get measured for my winter clothes, that I might not be too sensibly affected by the rigours of the season. I have succeeded so well in making myself ready for the anticipated change, that I have thoroughly satisfied myself, that a corner by my own fire-side at ten o'clock at night, is

worth as much as a masked ball; that a chapter of Montaigne, is better than a race in the wood of Boulogne; and that, taken all together, the pleasures of friendship may well console one, for the more ardent, but less durable favours of love. I am also tempted to bring into the account, (for at my time of life one should leave nothing out), a privilege which I enjoy without being vain of it, that of being admitted at all hours, and in all places, to the society of the youngest and prettiest women, without awaking the suspicion of a husband, or the jealousy of a lover. I have seen the day when I should have called a tete-a-tete, "une bonne fortune;" but now the boudoir is opened to me as freely as the saloon. The ladies have no longer any secrets to hide from me; I am not however, the dupe of a frankness which informs me they have no longer any interest to deceive me; but without flattery, I do not see that they often gain by appearing other than what they really are. With some exceptions,

the mysterious veil in which they envelope themselves, conceals more of their attractions than of their imperfections, more good qualities than defects. This observation is peculiarly applicable to Madame Amelia de Corneil.

I breakfasted some days since, tete-a-tete with this young lady, who boasts in the number of her advantages, youth, a charming figure, and a yearly income of twenty-four thousand livres. She inquired of me how I employed my time, and appeared disposed to envy the happiness, of which I bragged a little. "It is not," said I, "with my pleasures as with your's—for me, those are the most delicious, on which the sun shines; but perhaps even you would be pleased with what I enjoy, when I go to breakfast at eight in the morning, once or twice a week in the early part of spring, in the Swiss dairy, of the '*Jardin des plantes*,' and take my milk and eggs under the shade of the old cedar of Lebanon, which covers the tomb of Daubenton." Every thing

that offers to a woman the charm of novelty, is sure to captivate her attention. The beautiful Amelia made me promise to take her some morning at the hour I had named, to breakfast under Daubenton's cedar. "*At eight o'clock?*" said I,—"think well of it, at eight o'clock?"—"I will not make you wait five minutes." The thing was settled for one day that week.—I was punctual to the time named for the rendezvous, but a horrible headache had prevented her closing her eyes all that night, and she had but just gone to sleep—the next morning, she expected Madame Coutant at ten—the next, an aid-de-camp was setting off to join the army, and was to call to take charge of some letters she wished to get forwarded; the next was the day on which M. Constantini, the Italian master came, and she would not fail to be in the way to receive him for all the world. Thus, from morning to morning, and by excuse after excuse, the breakfast party was put off, till at length, patient as I am

with the ladies, I began to grow weary: I however, accepted a new appointment for Tuesday morning, on the express condition, that I would not hear of being again put off, but should proceed strait to her chamber.

I made my appearance at the time agreed upon; masters and servants, every body but the people employed to clean the house, were as yet, asleep. I went boldly to the chamber where Madame slept; I opened the blinds, and by singing the air,* "Awake fair Sleeper," I recalled to her memory the conditions for which I had stipulated the evening before. "Your mercy, my good hermit," she exclaimed, opening the curtains of her bed, and extending an arm of dazzling whiteness—"excuse me yet again for this one day."—"No, Madam—Oh no, for this once you must keep your word with me."—"I will to-morrow without fail."—"As you have hitherto done."—"If you knew how much

* Réveillez-vous, belle endormie.

I have to do."—"But what am I to do, Madame, who intended to make our breakfast in the '*Jardin des plantes*,' the subject of my Saturday's paper?"—"Take another text."—"One of your morning's for instance."—"You laugh at me, but that would be worth more than some of your grave dissertations:"—"Be it so—but it would be necessary that I should have time to think of it—to take notes to find a way of putting them together."—"Does that embarrass you? Well, I have a proposition to make.—It is impossible for me to go out this morning, but I do not wish that you should lose time by coming to me. Go and pass an hour in my library; I will rise; we will breakfast together, and I will dictate your article."—"I take you at your word." Madame de Cormeil then rung for her servants—I left the room, and went to the library to wait till she recalled me I took down a volume of Voltaire, and had scarcely read half of it, when a valet

de chambre came to tell me, that Madame wished to see me in her boudoir.

It is a very pretty thing to see a woman twenty:—

"——————— Dans le simple apparel,
D'une beauté qu'on d'arracher au sommeil!"

"In the simple attire of a beauty just snatched from slumber."

I am free to confess that I felt much pleasure in contemplating this figure of Heba, so fresh, so gracious—those flaxen locks which played on her forehead in such lovely disorder—that robe, half open, through which one might fancy they saw, to use the language of Ossian; "The sweet star of night half issuing from between the clouds."

"There is the pen and the paper; get ready," said she—"I will dictate;—you write. The subject shall be—my yesterday morning's occupations." I am ready, said I, "*The Morning of a pretty Woman,*' I will mix nothing else with the title.

"I had read Mademoiselle de la Fayette till three o'clock in the morning; my head full of Louis XIII., Cardinal Richelieu, Madame de Brégy, M. de Roquelaure, I did not go to sleep before day-break.—Charlotte came in to me at eleven o'clock; I had spent the time, I don't know how, twisting my *Madras* round my head in the Chinese, Creole, Provençale, and Savoyard fashions, without being able to please myself with either; I was angry with Charlotte; she had tears in her eyes; I gave her my box in the Theatre Feydeau for Sunday next.

"It was near noon when my husband entered my chamber; he had just returned from the Minister, and told me that his departure was fixed for the ensuing week.—His intention was that I should go and pass the summer on my estate in Burgundy, and I had a great deal of trouble in proving to him that it was more convenient that I should hire the Chateau d'Epernay, whence I might transport myself twice a week to

Paris, to visit the Opera, the Bouffons, and to hear news of him more readily. He concluded, as usual, by acknowledging that I was right, and promising that his man of business should go in the course of the day, and treat with the proprietor of the Chateau d'Epernay. We should breakfast together. Mademoiselle Despeaux sent me a hat of Italian straw—*It is a love!* (C'est un amour!) I was on my guard against telling M. de Cormeil that it cost five hundred francs. We should have had a whole hour of moralizing.—Mademoiselle Charlotte comes to bring me my list of pensioners* ; she augments it every day, and the fashionable trades-people lose something by it.

"After writing some notes, I ordered my horses; I threw myself into my carriage

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* Poor people relieved at home. Many ladies in Paris exercise this species of benevolence with as much generosity as discretion.——Note of the Author.

in dishabille and wrapped in a shawl, and went to the bath. I returned at one o'clock; my husband was tired of waiting; I thought I should have to breakfast alone; Madame Hennecourt and her daughter came to keep me company. We must wait till that young lady is married, before we know what name to give her silence and odd manner. As for the mother, every time I see her, I am tempted to tell her that when one has nothing agreeable to carry with them into the commerce of society, it would be well to possess some virtues to recommend them. Little Moreau came to present me with a sheet of the romance he has dedicated to me. My husband returned; his appearance put to flight the ladies, whom he does not like at all, and who do not return him more affection than they receive.

"I proposed to go with him to see the picture of the *Battle of Marengo*, by Vernet; I could do nothing better calculated to please him. The weather was beautiful; we

walked to the Rue de Lille. M. de Cormeil was ravished with this painting, and, particularly with its truth; he saw himself again at the head of his division; we should never have got away from the right wing, and the left wing, and the centre, and the reserve, and probably should have slept upon the field of battle, if I had, like him, forgotten the number of things I had to do. We return to our house; chance brought to our notice at Pont-tournant, the Karrick of Alfred, my husband's aide-de-camp and nephew; we met himself upon the terrace by the water-side. M. de Cormeil being called by business elsewhere, invited him to conduct me to the Bois de Boulogne; my little nephew assented without pressing.

"The walk in the wood was charming; all Paris was there. We had a hearty laugh at the fat baroness with her *coupé verd* and armorial bearings, which occupied the whole surface of her pannels. Alfred made me remark that the poor woman followed, without suspecting it, the carriage of Ma-

dame d'Arcis, in which I thought I saw young Saint-Alme. Poor Baroness! she is even more unfortunate than ridiculous: I believe however that I exaggerate.

"We returned to Paris about four o'clock. We looked in for a moment at the riding-school de Sourdis, where Madame Dutillais was taking her lesson—at her time of life to learn to ride on horseback! After whom would she race? We saw Madame de Brive, whom we had noticed at the Wood, enter with her Squire. She is a real Amazon! She is even more than that, if we may judge by her figure, by her voice, and, above all, by her bosom. Madame d'Angeville, whom I met at the riding-school, took me into her calash, and we went shopping together.

"We soon stopped at Noustiers, to select some kerchiefs of shot-silk a-la-Bayadère; they are pretty, but will soon become common; in eight days they will be no longer wearable. The whole world of folly was at Le Normand's, where it is

fashionable to shew oneself. They were finishing the nuptial basket of Mademoiselle Servey! By the choice of stuffs one might guess the age and fortune of the intended. Courtois had received some Cashmire shawls: prejudice apart, those of Terneaux are far superior. After trying some hats at Le Roi's, ordered a trimming of kamelia at Nattier's, got at Tessier's some essences and pastilles of Aloes, I arrived at home at five o'clock, and hurried to my toilet. Because it had pleased some country friends to come two hours before dinner time, M. de Cormeil, who was tired of them, was so ill-humoured as to have a good mind to find fault with me when I appeared in the saloon; but I had dressed in a robe of which he is very fond, and which becomes me exceedingly; besides, Hyppolyte had dressed my head with so much taste, that my husband had not the courage to grumble at me.

"Well then, what say you, my dear Hermit," continued Madame de Cormeil,

while she ceased to dictate, " is not this a morning well filled up, and an article ready made?"—" So excellently, Madame, that I only ask your permission to publish it as it is, without altering any thing but the proper names . . . and without adding any reflections?"—" Without any! It is your affair to see if your readers will be amused with this gossiping."—" I judge for them by the pleasure I have had in listening to you!"

No. XII.—15th May, 1813.

A DUEL.

Les hommes, dans le fond raisonnables, mettent sous les regles leurs préjugés mêmes.

Men who are really reasonable, subject even their prejudices to rule.

MONTESQUIEU, Esprit des Lois.

A M. D. Bréant, an old officer, was constantly declaiming against the folly of duelling. A person took it into his head, in order to ascertain the sincerity of his philosophy, to inform him one day, that his

son had just received a very serious insult, for which he had the *courage not* to demand satisfaction. M. Bréant immediately gave the lie in form, to him who had invented this story, and was with the greatest difficulty prevented from fighting him. This inconsistency, of which I can cite examples still more recent, is the necessary result of the discordancy existing in this point between manners, morality, and the law. Of all the prejudices now in direct opposition to the established law, the point of honour is perhaps the most ancient, and, I am afraid to say it, that which is the most difficult to be overcome, because it is in some sort identified with the national character. Of what importance is it in reality, that the law forbids, under pain of death, that which honour commands under pain of shame, in a warlike nation, where education makes cowardice a crime, and contempt a dreadful punishment.

God forbid that I should wish to become the apologist of a barbarous custom, "*of a*

ferocious prejudice, which places all virtue on the point of the sword;" but leaving the application to it of all the odious names with which moralists have endeavoured to degrade it, I am of opinion that in the actual state of our society it is much easier to attack the principle than to avoid its consequences. On this subject people are willing to think generally with Rousseau, provided they are allowed to act on particular occasions like M. Bréant. Let us then acknowledge, that however blameable the practice of duelling may be, it finds a sort of excuse in the delicacy of the sentiments which it supposes to exist, a pretext in the decency and the politeness which it maintains in the world, and a powerful ally in the public opinion which protects it against the punishment of the law. Sanval, in his Antiquities of Paris, does not trace the origin of this sanguinary custom farther back than to Gondebaud, king of the Burgundians, who, he says, sanctioned the practice by the law *Gombette*. Other his-

torians attribute its invention to the Franks, our paternal ancestors; but it is certain, that it was peculiar to this nation, as we see in the Life of Louis *le Debonnaire*, where it is said that Bernard demanded to clear himself of the crime imputed to him, by an appeal to arms, *more francis solito*. Once introduced into France, this custom was not slow in naturalizing itself. Chivalry, which adopted it, made it a fundamental principle of honour, and notwithstanding the severest laws, it could never be entirely extirpated. The ordinances of our kings have had no effect but to add disobedience to the crime they were intended to prevent, and the most illustrious blood has flowed on the scaffold in vain. It is even very remarkable that duels have never been more frequent than they were at those periods when they were most rigorously proscribed. The edict of Henry II. against duelling, issued in 1547, after the last authorized combat, between Jarnac and La Châtaigneraye, gave as it were the character

of fashion to that custom which was no longer resorted to as a judicial process. Under the reign of Henry III. this frenzy, in defiance of the severity of the laws, was carried so far, that, in allusion to the honours which had been paid by the king in the church of St. Paul to Caylus and Maugiron (killed in duel, by D'Entragues and Riberac), it was customary to say, "*I shall have him sculptured in marble,*" to express, "I shall kill him in a duel." Henry the Fourth is reproached with having displayed too much indulgence towards this species of crime; but it has not been remarked, that in his time the examples of it were much less frequent than during the two reigns between which his was placed. Duellists under Louis XIII. were pursued with all the severity of the law, and an idea may be formed of their number, by an extract of the Chancery registers, from which it appears that more than a thousand pardons were granted by Louis XIV. during the first twenty years of his reign.

The famous Declaration of 1679, which

for a moment seemed to abate the duelling frenzy, only served to change the field of battle, which was then removed to the frontiers.

Duels still more frequent under the reign of Louis XV., became then less fatal; the point of honour obtained its regulating code, in which injuries were divided into two classes, and no longer required the same kind of satisfaction. It was settled that they should continue to fight for nothing, but that they should only kill each other for something, and then was invented that *mezzo termine*, that combat for first blood, in which says Rousseau, "*affectation is mixed with cruelty, and men are only slain by chance.*" It is on the subject of the last description of combats, that the author of Eloisa exclaims with that eloquent indignation, which dictated to him, perhaps, the finest pages which have ever been written in any language. "*The first blood! Great God! and what wilt thou do with that blood, ferocious monster? . . . Wilt thou drink it?*"

At that period, for the least word, a man was obliged to draw; but it frequently happened, that a single crossing of the swords was considered a sufficient satisfaction for a slight offence. This ridiculous mania, did not escape dramatic authors, and supplied Fagan with one of the best scenes of his "Originaux," and with the highly comic part of *Bretenville*.

Up to that time, the sword had been the only weapon allowed in duels: the obligation of wearing it, constantly imposed, at the same time, that of knowing how to use it; and the certainty of being skilful to defend their lives, made men less careful of exposing them. The alteration which took place in dress, under the reign of Louis XVI., probably contributed to introduce the use of pistols in duels. A mode of fighting which, by-the-bye, has nothing noble—nothing French in it, in which, courage cannot supply the want of skill, and in which you are compelled to kill a defenceless adversary, or to suffer yourself to be

killed in the same manner. This anti-chivalric custom now begins to be out of fashion.

For about two centuries *witnesses* have taken the place of *seconds*. This is at least one step towards reason and equity; for if it is inhuman to fight to avenge your own injury, it were certainly most absurd, to fight to avenge the injury of another, against a person who had neither offended you nor your friend. Witnesses in our days, regulate the mode and the conditions of the fight, and in no case will they allow the adversaries to meet with unequal arms. They were less scrupulous in the time of Henry III., since it is ascertained, that in the duel between Caylus and D'Entragues, the first was killed, because he had only a sword; while the other fought with a sword, and a dagger. On Caylus's observing this inequality, D'Entragues, who however, was considered a man of honour, replied drily, "*You have then committed a great fault to leave your dagger at home, for we are here to fight, and not to discuss*

our weapons." At that period, it appears that the offended had even the singular privilege of imposing upon his adversary any condition to which he chose to submit himself. This at least is the inference which may be drawn from a fact, related by Brantome. He speaks of having witnessed a duel between a gentleman of very small stature, and a very tall Gascon sergeant. The first regulated the conditions of the duel in such a manner, that they were both obliged to fight with a collar round the neck, armed with points, which compelled them to hold up their heads very high. "*This mode,*" says Brantome, "*had been invented very prettily by the little one, who could raise his head against his tall adversary, and mark him at his ease, which the other could not do against him, without bending and piercing his own throat. In this manner the short combatant dispatched the Gascon very easily with two thrusts of his sword.*" In our days, the short one would pass for a murderer, if he

could find a tall man fool enough, or a fool tall enough to accept of such conditions.

This dissertation, into which, I have almost unconsciously fallen, is only an introduction—perhaps rather too long, to the adventure which I have now to relate. One day last week as I was breakfasting with a Bavarian in one of the *Café's*, on the Boulevart, near some young men, who were making a more substantial repast, I heard one of them called Alfred, receiving the congratulations of his friends, on a marriage which he was on the eve of contracting with a lovely girl, to whom he was passionately attached. It would be difficult to say how a quarrel began between that young man and one of his friends, as I only paid attention to it, when it had grown so serious, as to give me some anxiety respecting the manner in which it might terminate. I only know that the question was originally, how far a woman may love a man who wears a wig? Alfred had uttered some witticisms on the occasion,

which one of his friends was foolish enough to apply to himself; these witticisms had been replied to by other repartees—ill-nature had intruded, and as it always happens, he who remained first without an answer, was the first to get angry. The sneer with which Alfred repulsed the attack of his adversary, caused the latter to lose all patience, and some words escaped from him, the consequences of which I easily foresaw. I availed myself of the authority of my age, and my former profession, to interfere as a mediator in this quarrel. I insisted on the extremely trivial nature of the cause. I extenuated as much as possible the meaning, and especially the intent of the offensive terms, which one of the adversaries had used, and it is probable that I should have succeeded in reconciling them, had there not been present several people, who, without having had any other duels on their hands, than those in which they had acted as seconds, find the means of acquiring a cheap reputation for bravery.

I still know some bravos of that kind, on the watch for every dispute, and ready to carry every challenge; not a single pistol shot has been fired, not a single sword-thrust made in Paris for these last twenty years, of which they cannot give an account. No one knows better than these, the laws and the formalities of duels; they spend their lives in the fencing-rooms of Le Sage and Peignet, on the way to, and in the alleys of the woods of Boulogne, and Vincennes; and firmly believe, they have fought as often as they have seen others fight.

Desponding at the fruitlessness of my efforts, and the small success of my mediation, I saw with real grief, those young men, who, an hour before were inseparable friends, depart, after having appointed a meeting at noon at the Barrier of the *Champs-Elysées*. I conceived for the one who was called Alfred, and who was not better known to me than the rest, that sympathetic interest to which we

often surrender ourselves without inquiring into the cause; he appeared to be the youngest; loving and beloved;—his life seemed to belong, as it were, to two families. . . . . But there still perhaps remained some means of preventing the misfortune, of which I had a sad presentiment. I walked pensively towards the place of the meeting, and chanced to encounter in the great alley of the Champs-Elysées, an officer of the Chasseurs of the guard, whom I am in the habit of seeing at his relation's, Madame de R * * * *, and who is not more distinguished for the nobleness of his disposition, than for the renown of his valour. As I concluded my relation of the circumstances attending the approaching duel to the captain, we saw two carriages, in which the adversaries and their seconds were seated, arrive one after the other. The captain was on horseback; at my request he followed the carriages, which took the road to the wood of Boulogne, having promised to give me an account of all that

should happen. I had not much time to make long reflections on the strength of a tyrannical prejudice, which silences humanity, justice, and reason—which compels two friends to murder each other, and which allows judges (when an appeal is made to the authority of the laws), to condemn a criminal, whose conduct they approve, and would imitate in a similar case. At the moment when I reached the gate of the wood of Boulogne, I saw captain S*** hastily approaching, and read in his countenance the fatal news which he had to communicate. He gave his horse to the care of a boy on the green, and leading me into a neighbouring alley, related to me in a few words the cruel catastrophe, of which he had been a spectator. "The carriages," said he, "having stopped near *La Muette*, the four persons which they contained, alighted, and glided precipitately into the wood. I followed them, and having given my name, begged permission to interfere in a quarrel, with some of the

particulars of which, I was already acquainted.—'You are welcome captain,' answered the younger of the two adversaries, 'but spare us humiliating explanations at this moment, which could have no other result in any case, than to delay an encounter which is unavoidable.' Despairing of ultimate success, I endeavoured in my quality of witness, to alter something in the forms of the duel; we settled that only one shot should be fired on each side; that they should be placed at a distance of twenty paces, and that they should fire together on a given signal: I myself loaded Alfred's pistol, and made him take the lower part of the ground, which is of advantage in a pistol fight; I also advised him to moderate his impetuosity, which gave his adversary a decided superiority over him. All the arrangements being made, the antagonists on their ground, the pistols in their hands and cocked, the signal was given,—they fired,—and the unfortunate young man, for whom you and I had so much inter-

ested ourselves, 'fell mortally wounded." The grief which this fatal event excited in my heart, was the deepest which I have experienced for a long while, and I could not check my tears when the carriage passed me, which contained the remains of that unhappy youth, now to be carried back to his father, who at that very moment was employed in preparing for the celebration of his nuptials.

No. XIII.—29th MAY, 1813.

A HOUSE OF THE RUE DES ARCIS.

Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.

JUVENAL, Sat. 3.

La pauvreté nous expose à la risée des sots; c'est, peut-être, ce qu'elle a de plus insupportable.

Poverty exposes us to the laughter of fools, which is perhaps one of its most insupportable evils.

Reconnais donc, Antoine, et conclus avec moi,
Que la pauvreté mâle, active et vigilante,
Est, parmi les travaux, moins lasse et plus contente
Que la richesse oisive au sein des Voluptés.

BOILEAU, Epit.

I HAVE already somewhere quoted an excellent remark by the Author of the

Essay upon Paris: he observes, that at the time when he wrote (1750), his attorney was very poorly lodged in the Hotel of the Chancellor Duprat, and the wife of his librarian made their beds in the saloon of the baths of Gabrielle d'Estrées. It is vexatious, that after having caught a glimpse at this original and fruitful manner of treating his subject, Saint-Foix should have abandoned it to exhaust himself in endless dissertations upon the *Metempsychosis, the religion of the Indian Lingamistes, and the morals of Mahometans,* all of them matters which had nothing to do with the Pont-au-Change and the Place-Royale. There might be, in my opinion, a history of Paris more curious and more philosophical than that which shews us the principal monuments of this great city, as in theatres where time unceasingly renews the decorations and actors: this picture, the fidelity of which should be its chief merit, and which would require the most accurate research, would give birth to many singular contrasts,

and very odd coincidences. At an epoch when so many edifices rise from ruins, when so many palaces replace old falling tenements, and alter, if we may use the expression, the physiognomy of this queen of cities, I could wish that we might find means to preserve all the valuable traces which fame has left in these wrecks; I could wish that they did not take a single step without pointing out by an inscription, well attested and ostensible, the place where any grand event happened, the house of any illustrious personage, the spot where the ashes of the great reposed. Several investigations of this kind have been gone into, but no work collecting them into one focus has ever been produced. It is a shame to think that ninety-nine out of a hundred Parisians daily crossing the Court of the Saint-Chapelle are ignorant of the fact that Boileau in his youth inhabited a garret within its bounds; that Racine lodged in the Rue des Maçons, on the site where now stands the house, No. 17. Thanks to St. Evre-

mont, who so accurately designated it, some persons can still discover the address of Ninon, in the Rue des Tournelles; but there are very few who could point out to a stranger the hotel in the Rue de Bétizy, where Admiral Coligny was assassinated, and that other hotel of Carnavalet, rendered so celebrated by Madame de Sevigny, which is yet to be seen in the Rue Culture-sainte-Catherine, No. 27, just on the spot where the Constable de Clisson, was attacked by the murderers hired by Pierré de Craon. How many remarkable coincidences would occur in examining the changes which the same place has experienced! The frequenters of the *Tivoli d'Hiver* have no suspicion that they dance in the house in which died Jeanne d'Albret, the mother of a *good king;* a tax-gatherer of the *Droits-reunis* would not give himself any trouble were he told that he to-day revised an account of tobacco in the eating-room of the Constable Anne de Montmorency; and this fishmonger would have

a hearty laugh next Sunday on going to see the *Médicin malgré lui*, if she knew that it was performed in the market of Saint Joseph on the very spot where Moliere was interred. The example has been set by M. Cailhava: we owe to this academician the bust and inscription which consecrate the house under the piazzas, where the immortal author of the *Tartufe* and the *Misanthrope* was born. To revive or to preserve so many precious memorials of which the tradition is every day becoming lost, it would be desirable that well-informed men, invested with the character of public officers, should be authorized to take cognizance of the original title-deeds of all private property. I am sure that there is not an old building in this vast metropolis, respecting which they would not make some discovery more or less interesting. The following is the foundation for my opinion.

When we live to old age, it generally happens that we fall into some inheritance. About three or four years ago I had be-

queathed to me a very old house in the *Rue des Arcis*, the title-deeds of which were presented to me in a tin case, which I have lately had occasion to open, in order to elucidate a dispute respecting a party-wall. Among all the rubbish of waste paper, pulverized or turned yellow by time, I found a number of contracts of sale, by means of which I was enabled to scrape a sort of acquaintance with all the proprietors who had been my predecessors. The most ancient of these is a Nicholas Rondelet, Steward to King Charles the Fifth, from whom I learn that the Rue des Arcis, called in his time the *Rue des Assiz*, was formerly denominated *Vicus des Arsionibus*, and that it received this name in consequence of the houses having been burnt by the Normans in 886. (How much is this etymology superior to that of the Sieur de Launoy, who derives the appellation of *Assiz* from the *Assyrians*, who, as he says, traded to Paris,—God knows in what epoch!) But be this as it may, the Steward

Rondelet, in 1395, sold *our* house to Jean de Rieux, Marechal of France; it reached at this era the Apogee of its glory, and remained in this family under the title of the *Hotel de Rieux*, till the year 1588, when it was purchased by a Spanish captain, who resided in Paris at the period of the League. This noble Castilian was killed in an action with the royal army, and the house sold to a Squire of Madame de Montpensier, whose widow surrendered it by agreement to a young Serjeant of Louis XIII., who disposed of it to a Frankfort Jew, for money to pay his warlike equipments. It was next bought by a Citizen of Paris, who reckoned in his own family two hundred years of shrivalty, in virtue of which title fancying himself obliged to take part in the war of La Fronde, he one morning, after breakfasting with his family, took his matchlock, and went to be killed by chance on the 2d of July, 1652, in combat at the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. La Porte, Valet-de-Chambre to Louis XIV., pur-

chased this house from the children of the warlike sheriff. He resided in it many years, and gave it as a dowry to his daughter, who married an Auditor of Accounts. The Auditor sold it to buy another in the *Marais*, at that time the fashionable quarter. After this, our house changed its master four times in three months, and finally came into the possession of one of my grand-aunts, whose last son on dying left it to me.

Since the date of my becoming owner of this venerable tenement, it never entered into my head to pay it a visit: I have a principal *Locataire**, to whose superintendance I trust these affairs. This occupation of principal *Locataire* is a profession truly Parisian. More than three thousand individuals, who have no other means of existence than to act between the proprietor and the tenants of a house, through this employment acquire incomes, some of them

* A sort of agent.

very considerable. My principal *Locataire*, all attorney as he was, took but little more than his proper charges on the rent of 1800 francs which we gained together on the general occupation of the house. His death has been a source of tribulations to me. For six months I have heard of nothing but arrears of rent, of warnings, of doors and windows in want of repairs.—The produce of the building does not do more than pay the expences which it costs me. Yesterday, the bailiff comes to me for his fees for recovering from a tenant in arrear; to-day, the glazier calls for his bill; to-morrow, it will be a poor devil who lodges in a garret, to whom I must not only give leave to depart freely, because he has not the means of paying, but to whom I must absolutely lend some money, before he goes, to enable him to remove! In this labyrinth of tiresome business, where I learn nothing, and where I would be troubled ever to learn any thing, how much do I admire the spirit of order and firmness of

the deceased, who certainly displayed in the *administration* of three houses of the *Rue des Arcis* (for he was also principal *Locataire* for the two houses adjoining mine) more talent and a more intimate acquaintance with financial calculations than would have sufficed for the government of a province.

Well convinced that I had no other resource left to avoid being ruined by having become a proprietor, but to take personal cognizance of the charges and emoluments attendant upon my property, I at last determined on examining my house from the cellar to the garret, and visiting every one of my tenants. Accompanied by a solicitor and an architect, I took a coach one day last week, and bent my course to the Rue des Arcis.

Nothing can be less imposing than the façade of this ancient habitation of a Maréchal of France. The door of a very narrow passage, and the two little shops with which it is flanked, have evidently been

taken from a coach entrance, of which the roof and gothic ornaments are yet visible. The shop on the right is occupied by a wine-merchant, and that on the left by a fruiterer. A coach stopping at this place, where probably never coach stopped before in the memory of man, produced a sensation in the house which was still further augmented by the discovery that this vehicle contained the proprietor. The portress, to give herself an air of business, which her appearance too evidently belied, came to receive me with a besom in her hand. The fruiterer and wine-merchant ran, the one to engage me to look at the cellar, the vault of which was cracked, and the other to beg of me to allow him a shed, of which he stood in need to lodge four of his youngest children.

I entered the wine-merchant's, where I found many ticket-porters and some masons seated round a table, and breakfasting with a good appetite on a bit of household bread, a little cheese, some duck's eggs, and

a few pints of a small claret. The wine-merchant and the fruiterer thus played into one another's hands: the wine of the one promoted the sale of the eggs and *Marolles* cheese of his neighbour, who, in requital, sent him his customers to buy wine. After receiving the compliments of the wine-merchant and his family, and of two or three coachmen, who were drinking a glass of brandy at the counter, I despatched the architect to inspect the cellar, and give orders for the necessary repairs. While he was gone, I entered a little dark hole dignified with the name of a chamber, and questioned the portress, as to the situation, physical and moral, of every inhabitant of the house.

Of all the fair means which a curious person, who has *no Devil upon two Sticks* in his service, may employ, to become speedily acquainted with the entire news of any part of Paris, an intelligent and talkative portress offers incomparably the most con-

venient and certain. It is unknown to what pitch this class of domestics carry the talent for observation, and the information which may be extracted from their leisure. By address and caution, lovers may hope to conceal their connexion from the watchfulness of a mother or the jealousy of a husband; debtors may for a long time hide the derangement of their finances from their creditors; but neither the one nor the other can flatter themselves with being able to escape the penetration of a portress who possesses in the smallest degree the talent belonging to her station. Mine is a perfect model of the kind. Her lodge is the rendezvous of all the gossips in the neighbourhood, from the Pont-au-Change to the Rue des Lombards, and there is not a servant, nor a nursery maid, who does not in going for milk in the morning, stop a moment to chat with Mother *Potin*. Thus the most trifling matter does not happen in the whole quarter without her receiving the first intelligence of it, and being ready

to repeat it to you with the most minute details. I had a good opportunity for putting her good-will to the test; on this occasion I confined myself to obtaining an account of my tenants; but at some future time I may extend my inquiries to the history of the whole neighbourhood.

The first floor of my house, once honoured by the footsteps of the Steward's and the Maréchal's ladies, is now occupied by a mantua-maker. When I entered, there were twelve young girls ranged round a table, who sung while they wrought under the eye of their mistress: these invited me into a room whose beechwood furniture, cleaned with a varnish of bees'-wax, and well rubbed with flannel, displayed a sort of comfort and ease, which does not always belong to the richest trappings. Mademoiselle Bobinet, the head mantua-maker, asked me to lower her rent, simply for the sake of not departing from the custom on such visits, and complained of a smoky chimney, and a gutter belonging to the

fourth story, which incommoded the passage. I took a memorandum of these demands, and re-crossed the room of the young workwomen, whose songs my presence had suspended. The portress had told me that Mademoiselle Bobinet was one of the most celebrated mantua-makers in the parish, and that there was not a confectioner's wife in the Rue des Lombards, nor a grocer's in the Rue de la Verrerie, who did not wish to have a robe or a dress of her making. Mademoiselle Bobinet, whom thirty years had rendered a little more *enbonpoint*, without robbing her of her bloom, had six months ago lost her mother, and only waited for the termination of her mourning to marry a lad belonging to the Annuity Record Office, who had courted her two years, and never missed a single Sunday to take her to dine *à la Chaumière**, and dance at the Grands-Mar-

* In the country; from Chaumière, a thatched cottage.

roniers, without the reputation of Mademoiselle Bobinet even incurring the slightest stain.

The other portion of the first floor is occupied by a dyer, whose wife presented herself before me, and drowned a futile request in a deluge of words, with no other object but to divert the conversation which my Solicitor in vain attempted to introduce on the subject of three quarters rent in arrear, which the lady did not take into her account. While she spoke, her husband in a cap of blue cotton, and with his naked arms of the same colour, was stirring a decoction of madder in a caldron, to dye a piece of Merino stuff, in the Cachemire fashion. The steam from the caldron was any thing but agreeable; I endured it with pain; the wicked dyer observed this, and found means by stirring his lye with more ardour, to prevent me from taking any part in the discussion. I left the Solicitor to bicker it out with the dyer, and mounted myself to the second story.

The two principal occupants of this floor, which comprises four rooms, are a German bootmaker and a Prussian maker of instruments. Bound to each other by ties of the closest friendship, they pass one part of the week in working, and the other in tippling together. While I was conversing with them about a communication-door which they desired to have opened, a musician of the ball-room in St. Martin's square, came in for a violoncello which he had lent them. It was taken from the top of the old press, where it had been exiled for three months, to the great satisfaction of a family of mice, who had taken up their abode in the interior of the instrument, and who evacuated the place on the first summons with the most ludicrous celerity.—The owner of the violoncello did not think the matter so pleasant as it appeared to us, and began a dispute with the instrument-maker, which was only terminated by the interference of the Commissary of Police.

On the same staircase lodged a Clerk to the Port-au-vins, husband to a fish-vender in the market *des Innocents*. Both these persons were, at the period of my visit, at their posts, and the care of the house was left to their eldest daughter, a girl of twelve years of age. Four little creatures, seated on the ground round a great dish, were gaily devouring a soup, or rather a mash, of potatoes, while their sister, who was washing in a corner, surveyed them with all the tenderness and all the authority of a mother. I amused myself for a few moments with contemplating this domestic scene, worthy of the pencil of Greuze. The mother returned, saluted me with a frank and lively politeness, and, after caressing her children, giving each a long bunch of Burgundy grapes, she turned to me to tell me of the *hardness* of the times, of a disorder to which her husband was subject, of the bankruptcy which had compelled him to relinquish a large house he had furnished, and finished by obtaining

from me, contrary to the advice of my counsel, a diminution upon the new lease which I agreed to grant.

Scenes of another kind awaited me on the third floor, where I have for tenants, persons who were certainly never destined to meet on this stage. One of the two households is that of a modeller of figures in plaster; he *was sifting* at the moment we entered, and the door was no sooner opened than we were enveloped in a cloud of white dust which choaked us, and in an instant changed the coat of my solicitor from the black which it was before, into a strange mixture of mouse-colour and grey. Through this atmosphere of alabaster we discovered at the bottom of the chamber, something like what is represented as *ombres* in the opera, two children who were moving about a silken sieve, while their mother pounded lumps of plaster upon the floor with a mallet. The portress took the opportunity to suggest the removal of these tenants, who degraded the house, and of whom all the

others bitterly complained. These complaints gave rise to a terrible squabble between her and the modeller; and their voices, equally shrill, were mingled with fits of coughing; stimulated by the quantities of dust, which they swallowed whenever they opened their mouths to speak. The latter with his modelling tool in his hand nearly strangled himself in endeavouring to tell us in bad French, "that he was an *estimable* artist, a native *di Bologna*, a pupil of Canova," (whose chisel it is most probable he never sharpened). In his gesticulations, the arm of the Bolognese came too nearly into contact with the nose of the irascible portress, who put herself into a fencing posture with the handle of her besom, but not without causing notorious damage to the busts of Cicero and Demosthenes. The wife and children of the *Mallets*, to revenge the injury done to their father in the persons of the Greek and Roman Orators, made some wrecks of the Apollo and a Gladiator fly at the head of the lady portress. God

knows where the havock would have stopped, if my solicitor, whom both parties challenged to be a witness for them, had not interfered to put an end to the fray. The portress insisted on compensation for the blows she had received, and the modeller demanded payment for his broken plasters. One point he chiefly enforced, and that was, to prove to me in his gibberish, that in the country of the arts, genius ought not to be compelled to fulfil its pecuniary stipulations; that he had not wherewithal to pay his rent, and that he could not quit the premises unless I would give him sixty francs and let him go. "You shall lose nothing by me," added he proudly, for "I engage to acquit myself before the expiration of six months, by modelling your bust in *terra cota* for the ensuing exhibition, and according to a new mode which I have very lately invented." What could I do better than close with this proposition? Although I might distrain and sell all that he possessed, (not even excepting the *Abbe in plaster*, which he has ex

posed for six years at the corner of the Rue *Saint Florentin)* the produce would not defray the expenses of the process, and I might stand a chance of some day seeing myself parodied in the Saloon, as agreeably as I have been at the Vaudeville.

The portress, whose good-will I had secured by this attention, requested me in a low voice to go alone to the persons who occupied the only lodging of consequence, which remained for me to see. I was already inclined to do this, from an air of exterior propriety, for which the habitations of my other tenants did not prepare me. The little door painted grey, the straw mat, the slate in a frame on which to write addresses, the bell with a deer's-foot pull; all these things appeared to be of good augury. I rung—a very sweet voice demanded—"*Who is there?*" I mentioned my name, and the door opened. If I had been only forty years younger, I should probably have been struck by one of those thunderclaps, which heroes of romance

never escape at the first sight of a girl of fifteen, who appeared to receive me, and whose modest demeanour, and ravishing beauty compelled the highest admiration. Thanks to the Para-tonnerre,* which time has given me, I got off for a very agreeable surprise, and I did not stammer at all, in requesting this young lady to inform her mother, that I desired to speak with her. She left me in the anti-room while she went to deliver my message.

This chamber was the largest of the three, of which the lodging consisted. It was easy to see from the manner in which it was furnished, that it served alternately as a working-room, a dining-room, and a drawing-room. A small pallet of earthenware; a round table, upon which were ranged some little pieces of cambric cut into various shapes and shells full of co-

* This whimsical compound is formed after the fashion of para-pluye and para-sol, but *para-thunder* could scarcely do for translation.

lours; a piano-forte; a little portable book-case hung in a corner, and some vases of flowers, comprised the moveables of this chamber, over which, an attention to order, good taste, and the luxury of neatness, shed a degree of elegance not easily to be described. It is a common saying, "*tell me your company, and I will tell you what you are*;" we might pronounce with as much truth, "tell me what you read, and I will tell you what you are." On looking into the little library of my amiable tenants, I discovered that it contained the *Petit-Carême*, *Télémaque*, the tragedies of Racine, those of Voltaire, the *Henriade*, the Genius of Christianity, *Paul et Virginie*, and the Tales of Madame Cotin: I therefore concluded, conformably to a system of which I may perhaps one day develope the theory, that Madame Dervas (the lady who inhabits these apartments) was of distinguished birth; that she had a strong mind, liable to confound its sentiments with its opinions; that she had met great misfor-

tunes, to which love was no stranger, and that she sought in religion to sustain her resolution, and perhaps even to palliate her errors. Should my conjectures be verified, it will offer me an occasion for again trespassing on my readers with the story of two persons for whom I may, without committing myself, avow that I feel the most lively interest.

Madame Dervas appeared with her daughter, and her deportment striking for its dignity, politeness, and reserve, confirmed me in the favourable impression I had received before seeing her. I expressed to her, much less energetically than I wished, how much pleasure it afforded me to reckon her among the number of my tenants, and begged her to inform me if there was any thing which, as proprietor of the mansion, I could do to render her habitation more agreeable. On thanking me in the most gracious manner, she announced, with an expression of regret, the intention she entertained of leaving her lodgings. I

requested to know the cause of this resolution, and I was glad to learn that it was nothing more than the inconveniency she experienced from her neighbours. "They are honest people," added she, "but the trade they carry on is a little noisy, and the artificial flowers which my daughter and I make, agree very ill with the plaster powder which our neighbour sends us, and which penetrates through every thing." I hastened to expedite the removal of the Bolognese artist, and was carried so far by my zeal, as to engage not to let his apartment to any but a tenant, whose vicinity should be agreeable.

After a few moments conversation on the object of my visit, I endeavoured in the most adroit way I could devise, by enlarging upon my own private affairs, to provoke Madame de Dervas to a confidence, which she avoided with great dignity, without seeming to think herself lowered by the species of interest which was the only excuse for my indiscretion. I departed, so-

liciting permission to renew my call; it was granted, and that I may more frequently have an opportunity to avail myself of it, I have a mind to keep a little lodging for myself in my house of the *Rue des Arcis*.

No. XIV.—10th JULY, 1813.

THE BALCONY OF THE OPERA.

——— Vera incessa patuit Dea.

VIRGIL.

I KNEW in my youth an old Procurator of Parliament, (so rich as to be able to leave his study at two o'clock to the care of an upper clerk) who found it more agreeable to lead the life of a lad, at the age of sixty-

four, than to place himself, bachelor-like, under the interested guidance of a governess. This Procurator, whom I yet see, and who would not have been uglier than other people, but for the enormous size of his nose, never failed, immediately after dinner, to take his cup of coffee at Procope's, where he was the dramatic oracle. Thence he went to the Comedie-Français, where he was sure to be found every evening in the pit, near the railing of the orchestra, to which he fastened a little wooden stool, which served him, if not to sit upon, at least to rest on between the acts.

This ancient amateur, of a more correct taste and more cultivated mind than at that period belonged to his brethren of the long robe, had his memory stored with a prodigious number of theatrical anecdotes, which he told to admiration, and from which the Abbe de la Porte, with whom he was intimate, has gathered the best part of his collection of anecdotes since publish-

ed. M. Duvivier (for that was his name,) had seen three generations of tragic queens pass away before his eyes. He remembered Madame *Desmares;* he was present when Mademoiselle *Lecouvreur* took leave of the stage; and he divided his affections between Mademoiselles *Clairon* and *Dumenil.* We were always sure to see him enter in excessive ill-humour when a production of Corneille or Racine, by chance, failed to attract a crowded house. He then railed bitterly against the bad taste of the age and the folly of his contemporaries, and maintained with a sort of fury, that every man whose mind was not alienated, ought to enjoy the same pleasure in the hundredth representation of Cinna as in the first.

At the other end of the table, as if to serve for a balance to the Procurator, sat the Chevalier de Marency, a retired officer, whose enthusiasm for the opera was not less ardent nor less exclusive than that of M. Duvivier for the Comedie-Français.

This dissimilarity in their tastes, imparted to the antipathy which they entertained against each other, the character of the utmost hatred. They delighted in disputation, and often maintained the pre-eminence of their favourite spectacles with all the bigotted rage of two sectaries of different religions, which they still further resembled in the mania of proselytism. The victory was a long time doubtful, and was adjudged to those who could carry off the greatest number of associates to the *Café Procope*, or the *Café Militaire* in the Rue *Saint-Honore*, nearly opposite the Palais-Royal, where the opera-house then stood. Of all his partisans, the one whom the Chevalier Marency loved most, was a young Marquis of Bressac, who had recently quitted the hotel of the pages, to enter that of the musqueteers. This gentleman, who was very fond of music, had the misfortune to take lessons in singing from a *Buffo* of the name of Manelli, who came to Paris with

the first ultramontane troop whom we saw in this capital. This choice of an Italian master was singularly displeasing to the Chevalier, and M. de Bressac lost his affections for ever, by one day declaring "that the Italian music was much finer than the French, and that he only went to the opera for the sake of the dance." So horrid a blasphemy gave the signal for a dreadful civil war, which lasted half a century, and of which it was more easy to foresee the result than to assign the termination. The Chevalier harangued in the green-room and saloons, in favour of his friends *Mondonville*, *Fouquet*, and *Rameau*; the Marquis emulated him in extolling also in the saloons and under the trees of the Palais-Royal, *the Scarlati*, *the Leo*, *the Durante*; and the animosity between the two champions rose to such a pitch, that they forsook the Balcony of the Opera, where it was impossible for them to meet together without quarrelling, and with their separate friends, established themselves at the

opposite extremities of the Orchestra: the Marquis de Bressac under the queen's box, and the Chevalier Marency under that of the king, whence is derived the phrase of *the queen's corner*, and *the king's corner*, being the places where the two armies had their head quarters, and the commanders assembled their staff.

Pamphlets were the first weapons to which they had recourse. Marency employed young Patu to compose the Adieux de Goût, (farewells of taste) against the Italian Buffos. This criticism replete with sense, attic salt, and spirit, caused a duel to be fought between him and the Marquis de Bressac, in which the young author received a thrust of a sword, which a few years after consigned him to the grave. Next year Grimm published his *Petit Prophete* against the *Ramistes;* and the *Letter* of Rousseau on *the French Music* was the brand which enveloped both *corners* of the Opera in flames. When the storm was at its height, the men of sense, the real ama-

teurs who wanted only good music without troubling themselves about the name of the composer, took refuge in the *Balcony* as in a place where they might observe the signs of the times, and count the shipwrecks. From this epoch we may date the eclat and influence of the *Balcony of the Opera*, which enjoys at this theatre the privilege which the pit usurps at the others, of pronouncing final sentence on the merits of pieces and performers.

The Chevalier died; the small success which attended the *Armide* of Lully on its last revival, accelerated his fate. The General of the *Queen's Corner* having no longer any rival in the opposite party worthy of his prowess, like another Montécuculi after the death of Turenne, abandoned the command of his forces, and returned to his place in the Balcony, of which the President de Miremont and the *Bailli* Descares were then the most remarkable and constant frequenters. The former came there to deplore the loss of Mademoi-

selle Prévost, of whom he had been for twenty years something more than the admirer, and to whose memory Mademoiselle * * * * had, as report goes, the glory of rendering him faithless. The prude Sallé, of old the object of the Bailli's tender cares, was still the theme of his praise; but as he was ruined by her, he did not think himself bound to repeat the eulogies which Voltaire had bestowed upon his *vertu*. Mademoiselles Lany and Allard were already the delight of the Opera, and particularly of M. M. de Bressac and de Luxembourg. When yet young, I left Paris, to which I did not return for five or six years. I remained a very short while, and other travels which ensued and occupied a more extended period, finished by rendering me an entire stranger to the new generations of actors, dancers, and spectators, who succeeded each other at the Opera during my long absence, till, at last, the lapse of time effaced from my memory even the names of the persons whose re-

membrance was intertwined with the recollections of my earliest years; an unexpected circumstance recalled them to my mind.

I went a few days ago to the Opera, to see *Armide*, and took my favourite place on the right side of the Balcony. Near me, on the same bench, sat a man about my own age, whose blue coat, buttoned from top to bottom, little plaited stock, and buckle borrowed from the cavalry fashion, proclaimed him to be an old officer. With his crutch-headed cane between his legs, he appeared to be listening to the conversation of those around him; and, in the visible and impatient displeasure which it caused him, he every moment opened and shut a tortoise-shell snuff-box, which he held in his hand, turning each time to the side on which I was, to address himself to me. I have not forgot one word of our conversation, and for the sake of exactitude I shall copy out the first part of it, by way of dialogue:

The Stranger. "In your time and mine, Sir, (for I believe we date from the same era) people did not utter such foolish impertinence in so loud a tone of voice; nor did they come to the Balcony of the Opera in boots with switches in their hands?"

The Hermit. "They dressed better, but they sometimes reasoned as badly."

The Stranger. "It is six and thirty years since I set my foot in the Opera-house. I was here for the last time in 1777, the day of the first representation of this very *Armide* of the Chevalier Gluck, which I found, let me tell you, far inferior to that of Lully.

The Hermit. "If you have lost your prejudices you will now judge differently."

The Stranger. "How divinely Mademoiselle Fel sang the admirable duet in the fifth act!"

The Hermit. "You have behind you M. de L * * *, who will not suffer you to forget the impression which Mademoiselle Arnould produced in the same duet, in

which you are about to hear an actress who surpasses both the one and the other."

The Stranger. "'Tis little matter after all; for I will say to you what I said in this same place half a century ago; *there is no music like the Italian music, and I only come here for the dance.*"

The Hermit. "You bring to my recollection at this moment the grand contention of the Buffoons, who * * * * * * *."

The Stranger. "For fear you took any concern in it, you ought to be apprized that you are speaking to the Marquis de Bressac."

[As I have no intention of spinning out the recollections of this comedy, I make a present to my readers of "*What can that be you! How happens it! By what chance!*" and twenty other exclamations, which mean nothing more than that people have lost sight of each other for a long time, and are very much surprised at meeting again.]

The Marquis. "We were just speaking

of Mademoiselle Fel. You remember that Desmahis, when at supper with me, made the verse in which he called that Armide a Sorceress."

The Hermit. "I also remember that Grimm wished to fight a duel with him, in the hope of touching the heart of the unfeeling beauty, and that he was answered by the verse of Regnard,

"Q'un âmant mort pour nous, nous mettrait
"en crédit!"

The Marquis. "You breakfasted with me and the lusty Fargenville on the day when Barthe read to us his famous *Règlement* which made so much noise in the Green-Room.

The Hermit. "It is indisputably the finest piece of humour that has been written on the Opera."

Here the curtain drew up, and the performance commenced. Every point, every actor became the subject of a discussion for us between the acts. At the close of

the second, the Marquis confessed that there was no serious Opera which could fairly be compared to this Masterpiece.

Obliged to acknowledge that the French Opera had improved prodigiously both with respect to the music, and execution, he wanted, by way of compensation, to extract from me a confession that the dancing had wonderfully degenerated; that it was now confined to the art of multiplying pirouettes; that all the kinds were confounded; and that even in the *half-character* (the only kind that had been preserved) there was nothing that could stand in comparison with Mademoiselle Guinard. I was going to reply to him by citing, in common with all Paris, the elegant precision, the decorum, the admirable finish of the dance of Madame Gardel; the exquisite grace of Mademoiselle Bigottini; when Mademoiselle Gosselin made her appearance. I never saw conversion more rapid, nor assertion more speedily refuted. The Nestor of the Balcony was opening his mouth to tell me

that the arms of this young dancer were a little too long, at the moment she opened them with an inexpressible charm, which did not suffer him to clothe his first idea in words. His admiration increased at every step, at every movement of the modern Terpsichore, and was manifested by exclamations which, happily for him, were lost amid the tumult of applause with which the theatre resounded. The Marquis is not merely a simple amateur of the art of dancing; he is an able connoisseur, and with this title, his opinion of the talents of Mademoiselle Gosselin ought to have some weight.

It is impossible, if we believe him, to unite in a higher degree all the qualities which constitute a perfect dancer: an extreme lightness; an immoveable steadiness, which always makes her mistress of the point of termination in the most rapid movements, when and how she pleases; a grace most happily combined of strength and skill; but, above all, a flexibility, an

enchanting negligence, which gives the dance a character of inimitable voluptuousness.

I am convinced of the truth of all the Marquis said; but I did not exclaim one atom the less about the decline of spirit and taste, on observing that the poetry of Quinault and the music of Gluck, executed with rare perfection by Nourrit and Madame Branchu, obtained less applause and excited less enthusiasm than a single dance of Mademoiselle Gosselin.

No. XV.—7th August, 1813.

A YOUNG MAN'S DAY.

Most times, the greatest art is to comply
In granting that which justice may deny.

KING.

La jeunesse doit regarder devant, et la vieillesse derriére soi.

MONTAIGNE.

To be a Mentor is a noble employment. How many old men conceive themselves called upon to perform that office, without any other qualification than their age! It

is true that Minerva when she accompanied Telemachus, put on a grey beard; but this beard concealed her wisdom: in these days we should be often deceived, if we trusted to one. It is not the ambition of maintaining a paradox, that induces me to assert that for some years past, there has been, between the old and the young men, a complete exchange of their good and bad qualities, of their virtues and their vices; an exchange so radical, as to render it difficult to know an old man from a young one, except by the colour of his hair, and the manner of his reception among women. I could cite as many cases of young men who are morose, prudent, circumspect, and selfish, as of old ones, who are giddy, extravagant, dissolute, and indiscreet. This exchange of qualities has produced caricatures equally ridiculous, whether considered in a physical or moral point of view. It is a singular reproach to make to a young man of the present day, to say that he is too prudent, and yet that reproach may

be often justly applied. The foresight of fathers never had fewer obstacles to overcome from the passions of their sons. A modern young man may safely be admitted into the family consultations, whether the object of them be to choose for him a profession or a wife. It is astonishing with what calmness and accuracy he will calculate the advantages of the one, and the portion of the other. Be not under any apprehension that love will blind, or that enthusiasm will mislead him. The young men of the present day know as well as their grandfathers how to guard themselves against all illusions of that kind. They are not old enough to have any recollection, but they already have experience. At twenty years of age, they have no longer any passions, and they have got the gout. If I am not very much disposed to admire this green maturity of our juvenile race, I look with contempt on those old men, who endeavour to prolong the appearance of youth, at the expense of general esteem and consideration. The

little respect which is now paid to old age, has been cited, and with reason as a proof, of the decline of public manners. But our attention is not sufficiently directed to those examples which serve as excuses, or at least as pretexts for these violations of public morality. The scandal of the profligate life of one old man has a much more powerful effect upon public manners than the dissoluteness of an hundred young ones. The authority of age is felt, even in the very contempt which it draws upon itself. The proof of this truth, founded upon a notorious fact, and one in which I am personally interested, will lead me, though in an inverted sense, from the object which I proposed. I will begin without further preamble.

I have a distant relation who calls me cousin, (the title of grand uncle would be more appropriate) whom I have already introduced to my readers, under the name of *Ernest de Lallé.** He is a captain of hus-

* In a paper omitted in this selection.—*Tr.*

sars, carries his arm in a sling, wears a cross at his button-hole, has 25,000 francs a year to spend; in a word, he has all the qualities which *Julia D'Etanges* requires in a lover. All these advantages are quite enough to enable him to pass the leave of absence which he has obtained for the recovery of his health, agreeably at Paris, and to give a great deal of uneasiness to a tender and very economical father, who lives eighty-four leagues from the capital. Invested as it were by power of attorney, with a part of his authority, I was bound, according to my instructions, to receive every eight days a visit from Ernest, to make him give me an exact account of his expences, and to sanction them by my signature, before he could draw for any money; and I was further requested, in case of the least negligence or misconduct on his part, immediately to apprise his father. Thus, was this captain of hussars expected to live at Paris like a young student in college; my relation however, is not of the number of those *Cato's*, of whom I was just now

complaining, and I neither expected, nor wished to make him submit to so strict a regimen. Upon his first visit, we drew up a fresh convention, and modified some of the articles, in order to insure a more punctual performance of the remainder. During the first month he was tolerably faithful to his promise; before the end of the second he had entirely forgot it. I therefore determined one night, when I was going to bed, to call upon him the next morning, for the purpose of giving him a lecture. In ruminating however, upon the subject, my ideas insensibly took another turn, and while I was recapitulating the various complaints which I had to make against him, I found in the recollection of my own youth, strong motives for granting to him the same degree of indulgence which I had often wished for myself. The consequence was, that I abandoned my plan of giving him a lecture, and I went out next morning with the intention of paying my pupil a friendly visit, in which I pro-

posed to take the opportunity of remonstrating a little with him upon his conduct, in order that I might not be thought to give up the imprescriptible right of an old man. About eight o'clock in the morning, I reached the hotel *D'Avranches*, where the young gentleman lived. I asked for *M. Ernest de Lallé*. "He is not at home." "What! is he gone out so early?" "No, Sir." "I understand you, he did not come home last night." "I beg your pardon, Sir, he did." "Why, if he came home last night, and is not gone this morning, he must be at home now." "Nevertheless, Sir, he is not at home. In my quality of porter, I know no more. But there is *Henri*, his *Valet de Chambre;* you must get an explanation from him." I then addressed myself to Henri: "I want to speak to your master, and he wants to see me." "I know, Sir, but—Sir——just at this moment——you see, Sir——that—M. Ernest."——"Why, *Henri*, you are rather awkward and indiscreet for the valet de chambre of a young

man of fashion; go and tell your master that I will wait for him in the garden of the hotel." In about a quarter of an hour, I saw Captain Ernest arrive in his morning pantaloons, with a Spanish cap of black silk on his head. He ran to me with a smiling air, and after having made some excuses for not having visited me for so long a time, he proceeded to apologize for not receiving me in his apartment. "But ... the weather was so fine, that he thought I should prefer chatting with him in the garden, and smoking an Havannah cygar, to being shut up in an excessively hot *garret*." I thanked him with as much gravity as I could, for his kind attention, and accepted the cygar. We made some turns in the garden, and all his cajolling (of which I was not altogether the dupe,) did not prevent me from reproaching him for his conduct. He assured me that his mode of life was as regular as it was irreproachable and in order to enable me to judge for myself, he proposed that I should pass a

whole day with him, and be a witness to the nature of his occupations and his pleasures,—in a word, of his daily life. "At what o'clock," said I smiling, "shall we begin the day?" "From this very moment, if you please." I pretended not to notice a sign which Henri made to his master at the end of one of the walks, and accompanied Ernest to his apartment. We agreed, that according to his usual practice, we should take an airing on horseback before breakfast. While he was dressing, I amused myself with looking at some books that were lying upon the sopha; he seemed to triumph in the satisfaction which was displayed in my countenance, as I opened successively volumes of Montaigne, Voltaire, Polybius; he however, seemed a little uneasy, when he saw me take up, and examine with great attention, some *petites spirales noires en fil de laiton, auxquelles restaient attaches quelques cheveux blonds;* but he soon recovered his composure, on the supposition that I was ignorant of their

use. Before we went out, he gave audience to his town tailor, and his military tailor, the celebrated *Walther*, of whom he ordered a new uniform, the price of which, was fixed for 2000 livres. In the mean time I had sent home for my riding boots, which had not been removed from their place for two years, and my old fashioned spurs. Ernest had provided for me a fine long tailed cavalry horse, with a French troop saddle and splendid caparison. He mounted in the English fashion, a long, thin, short-tailed animal, which he called a race-horse. The finest horse in his stable was destined, according to the modern custom, for the servant that attended us, who wore a square cut riding-frock and a leather belt round his waist. During our ride, which we extended as far as *Rincy*, we discussed the change which has taken place in the mode of mounting a horse; and I forced my young companion to confess that the art of riding was now reduced to the mere object of speed, and that the foreign innovations

which had been introduced, (some of which, nevertheless have their advantages) were made at the expence of grace, firmness and elegance. It was eleven o'clock when we alighted at the *Café Tortoni* to breakfast. The saloon of this coffee-house has this peculiarity about it, that almost all the persons who assemble there, are known to one another. It is a point of union, where there is so great a certainty of meeting one's acquaintance, that a young man of fashion thinks he ought not to breakfast any where else. It is a kind of *bon ton* to assume the manners of a persom accustomed to the place: therefore Ernest upon entering, did not fail to say a civil word to the young girl in the bar, to pay a compliment to Madame Tortoni upon her good looks, and to call loudly for *Prévost*. Prevost! that Corypheus of all the waiters in the world, whose zeal, address, and inconceivable activity can only be equalled by the elegance of his manners, and the excessive politeness of his language! While I took my

cup of chocolate, and Ernest breakfasted, as people used to dine in my time, when they were very hungry, General F *** who sat at the next table, was speaking about fire-arms, and particularly about some that had been newly invented by M. Pauly. Ernest, who had just purchased a case of duelling pistols, and a fowling piece, thought proper to declaim against an invention, about which he knew nothing. I remonstrated against this French *mania* of decrying our own invention, and observed that at least it would be fair to examine before we decided. As we were not far from the *Rue de trois Freres*, in which the manufactory of M. Pauly is situated, General F*** offered to conduct us thither. After a very attentive examination, and trial of his various inventions, I left the place convinced that these fire-arms, which would perhaps make the tour of Europe before they were adopted in France, where they were invented, were as superior to those now in use, as our present ones, are to the match-locks

of the fifteenth century. Ernest's gig waited for us at the corner of the Boulevarts, and the hour was approaching when he was expected at Charrier's, to play a match at Tennis, which had been arranged the preceding evening, and in which some of the most distinguished players, particularly M. De * * * * were engaged. I placed myself behind the nets in the large gallery at the end, where I amused myself in counting the *Chasses*. Ernest dressed himself in the usual costume, in elastic pantaloons, green slippers, &c. &c. &c. In less than half an hour, he had lost between fifteen and twenty Napoleons; but according to his own account, he played remarkably well, and his loss was only attributable to his partner. I had resolved for one day to lead the life of a young man, and therefore I let him conduct me to the Chinese baths, for his wound prevented him from going to the swimming school. We chose two adjoining apartments; I employed the time of the bath in reading the news-papers,

and Ernest in writing two or three billets, the address of which, I did not ask him to shew me. He had ordered his servant to attend him there with his cloaths, and I saw him soon after appear in what he called a half dress; he had a light green frock coat, a waistcoat *a la cosaque*, kerseymere breeches, and stockings of the same colour. After having deliberated upon the question, of which Restorateurs we should dine at, we determined upon the Café Hardi, less on account of the reputation of the cook, than on account of the society which is to be found there from five to seven o'clock, and for the iced Champagne, which it is agreed by every one, is better there, than at any other house.' After dinner we went to see the three last acts of Gabriel de Vergy, at the Theatre Francais. This Shakesperian atrocity will not be laid aside, even when Mlle. Duchenois gives up her part. Ernest, who had left me in the orchestra to run about from box to box, soon rejoined me, and took

me to the opera; it was just the time when the ballet was commencing, Mlle. Gosselin was to dance that night, and my relation thought his presence as necessary in the theatre on such an occasion, as with his regiment on the day of battle. The spectators appeared to possess more sense than I expected, for they loudly applauded both Madame *Gardel* and her young rival. Upon this occasion, the public found that at the opera

"Un Trône est assez grand pour etre partagé."

We had scarcely descended the stairs, when the carriage was announced; but as it is considered as a kind of *bon ton*, to be seen at the conclusion of the opera, Ernest contrived to manage so well, that the guards ordered our vehicle to pass on, and we were compelled to wait half an hour longer. After having taken ices at the *Café de Foi*, where my cousin met some females whom he did, and a great many more whom he pretended to know we entered the *Salon des Etran-*

gers, which we left at the hour of supper, at one o'clock in the morning. Ernest, while conducting me home, told me that he should go directly to his own lodging, and study according to his constant practice for three or four hours before he went to bed. The only guarantee I had for the performance of his promise, was the books which I had seen upon the sopha. "I believe you!" said I, with a grave air; "I believe you!" and at the same time, returned to him the *Petite Spirale Noire,* which I had found on the same table with them, and inadvertently carried away.

No. XVI.—14th August, 1813.

THE WATERS.

" Salve, Pœoniæ largitor nobilis undæ !
Salve, Dardanii gloria magna soli !
Publica morborum requies, commune medentum
Auxilium, præsens numeri, inempta salus.

Claud.

One of my correspondents, who has assumed the signature of Alexis, and whose writings are characterized by that gay and *piquant* species of humour, of which our

writers afford so few examples. My correspondent, Alexis, I say, in a letter upon the subject of Mineral Waters, requests me to publish such observations as have occurred to me upon that matter. In consequence of which, I am determined to continue the task (which he has rendered the more difficult, by having commenced it) even though it should involve me in a fresh quarrel with Madame C. de M., who has written to reproach me with having "endeavoured to run down her sex, and with spoiling all the portraits which I draw, some of which she admits are not destitute of point or originality, by my bitter satires against women." If there was any foundation for this charge, I must be the most unskilful of men, for I protest, in all the sincerity of my soul, that the sex never had a more sincere admirer, nor a more zealous defender than I am. But does it follow thence, that in my work, when I am endeavouring to depict the actual state of manners, I am not to allow myself to make

any observation upon females, unless it be in the shape of a panegyrick? I am very ready to admit, or even to prove, that at no period whatever, had the *fair* sex, a better title to that of *good* sex, than they have at present; but notwithstanding all this, the *fair* and *good* will still furnish to my critical notice, a very honest contingent of faults, of caprices, of follies, and of absurdities. But this, *en passant*,—to return to my text.

It is now near half a century since the fashion of going to *drink the waters* at certain seasons of the year, became general among the valetudinarians of the upper classes of society. Before that time, it was only after very mature deliberation, and in the last stages of certain maladies, that a man determined to go to Bareges or to Bourbonne, the waters of which, from time immemorial have been considered as specifics in certain cases. A petty prince of the Germanic Confederation, whose Marquisate of Franchimont will not furnish

him with the means, of every year visiting London or Paris, where his taste for play would induce him to reside, formed the plan of inducing those persons to come to him whom he could not afford to visit. Pleasure was to be the real motive of the journey, but it was necessary to devise a plausible pretext, and that of health afforded a sufficient answer to all objections. A medical man more conversant in every art, than that of physic, suggested to the Marquis the idea of drawing some advantage from the Mineral Waters, which were to be found in his little States, and to establish the reputation of the village of Spa, the future glory of which he foretold.

The Doctor wrote a pamphlet, in which he recalled to the memory of the world, the antiquity of these waters, celebrated by Pliny, under the name of *Fons Tungrorum*, and proved that they were an infallible remedy for nervous affections, and for those vapours with which the women from one end of Europe to the other had, for some time

been affected. At the same time that the pamphlet was published, *a prospectus* was circulated at London, at Vienna, and at Paris, in which it was announced, in order to alleviate the sufferings of the sick, an English Club, a French Ridotto, and a saloon for concerts and theatrical representations, besides a bank for *Trente et Un* had been established at Spa. From that moment the invalids of fashion from all the European capitals crowded to this little village in the country of Liege. It is perhaps because these are never so sensible of the value of life, as when they are in danger of losing it, that they spend so joyous a life in those receptacles of human infirmity: such at least was the case in 1772, when I first visited Spa, in company with Baron D'Erfeuil, who at that time enjoyed as much celebrity at the *Waters* as the Viscount C. had obtained in the green-rooms of the theatres. We travelled together at our joint expense, and lodged in a small house which still exists opposite the Fontaine du *Pouhon*.

As soon as our arrival, or rather that of my companion, was known, a printed paper was sent to us, containing a list of the persons who were then *taking the waters.* Among the number was the Marshal de ***, to whom we paid our first visit. He invited us to dine with him the next day, and we found a numerous and brilliant company assembled at his house, among whom I was surprized to see a M. *Cantin,* who had been pointed out to me at Paris as the *Croupier* of a gaming table. "If I were to leave you to yourself," said my companion, "you would be in a state of constant astonishment; learn then, once for all, that no consequence whatever is attributed to any thing that is seen, said, or done in this place; every one enjoys the most perfect freedom. No one thinks it expedient to scrutinize too minutely the conduct of others, lest he should draw too much attention to his own, and it often happens, that the man is treated as a friend, or even as a lover, at Spa, by those who would not

return his salute in Paris or at Versailles. All men who visit Spa are led thither, either for health, or for amusement; and nothing brings the various ranks of men nearer to each other than pleasure or affliction. I know more than you do of the man whose presence at the table of a Marshal of France astonished you so much. He is the son of a hosier at Rheims; he left his family when he was very young, as Secretary to I forget what Margrave, whose service he quitted after a few years, having obtained permission to wear in his button-hole a ribbon, a privilege which, at that time, might be purchased in Germany for a few ducats. This distinction induced him at Paris to assume the title of Chevalier, and to add an *i*, to his family name; the *Chevalier Cantini* is now the director of the Pharoah table, and you will by and by see him exercising his functions in the saloon of the Ridotto."—If I were to yield myself up to the pleasure of recollection, which forms the delight of old men, I should give a more detailed

account of my first campaign at Spa, for every event that then occurred is indelibly impressed on my mind. I shall however content myself with copying a few lines from my Journal, which will be sufficient to give you an idea of the sort of life which was then led at Spa, and I believe things are not much changed since that time.

July 22, 1772.

I went to bed at two o'clock, and got up at sun-rise, and proceeded immediately to knock at the window shutters of the Count, and to throw some pebbles against the windows of Madame Sophia de B. At seven o'clock we were all assembled, viz. Sophia, her mother, the Count and myself, on the *Place Pouhon*, where we took our first glass of water. The ladies then went in a cabriolet to the fountain of *Géronstère*.—We followed them upon *Escalins**.

* Small horses, so called from the sum paid for the hire of them, which was an Escalin, or about a shilling.

The Doctor had recommended Sophia to take three glasses of water from this fountain, with the interval of half an hour between each, and to continue walking as fast as she could the whole time. Her mother who was not able to keep pace with her, invested me with the office of seeing the injunctions of the physician literally obeyed. Our promenade at the Fountains continued till nine o'clock. We did not stop at the *Wattrotz* nor at the *Sauvenière*, but we stopped two hours at the *Tonnulef*, where the mother of Sophia took the benefit of the pump. It was twelve o'clock when we returned into the town. The ladies then went to pay a morning visit to *Madame la Marechale*, and the Count and I passed an hour at the English Club. We dined with Lady Susan Grenville: upon that occasion the gentlemen did not *pass the bottle*, and we quitted the table at the same time with the ladies in order to go to the concert, where I rejoined Mademoiselle

de B———. The Ridotto was brilliant—Sophia danced only with me, and did not permit me to approach the *Trente et Un* table. We retired at twelve o'clock: the night was beautiful, the moon shone with all her splendour, and a walk to the mountains was suggested;—I proposed that we should go to the cabin of "Annette and Lubin."* I gave my arm to Sophia, and we arrived a long time before the rest. A party had preceded us, for we found a bougie burning: I had brought with me by accident, the second volume of the new Heloise. Sophia proposed to me to read some letters—I selected well * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"Qualis nox illa, Dii, Deaque!"

That day is marked in my journal with

* These personages of the tale of Marmontel, were born at Spa, the English built them a cottage, the ruins of which, are yet visible.

two red asterisks, a mark which I only find thirteen times in my journal, in a course of forty years. I pass over that long period to say a few words about a journey which I took two years ago to Plombieres, with no other object, but that of getting rid of my rheumatism; I took no other book with me, but the "Manual for Gouty Men," a work which has nothing at all in common with the new Heloise. Plombieres, whose tepid waters are the most anciently celebrated in France, is, if I may use the expression, buried in an abyss in the midst of the *Vosges*. On your approach it seems as if you would be precipitated on the town, and yet you approach it easily by an avenue on the side of the Remirement, by an avenue called *the Ladies Walk*. This village consists only of one long narrow street, in a valley between two mountains, covered with wood from their base to their summit, and terminated by a walk, called *la Filerie*, which is still more pleasant than

the ladies walk: the houses, which, though built with rustic simplicity, are exceedingly neat, are all inns during the continuance of the season; the most remarkable, are those of M. Jaconet, and the late Doctor Martinel. The former takes care to inform you, that he was formerly cook to King Stanislaus, from which we may infer that that friend of Charles XII. was by no means an epicure. I lodged in the house of the latter; this physician, who derived his title from the waters, had never tasted water of any kind during his life. Sick persons are rather more scarce at Plombieres than at Spa, but the life led at both places is nearly the same. The company rise at an early hour and assemble altogether in the saloon of the *large bason*, where they all bathe in common. This vast bath affords a curious spectacle, in which men and women, boys and girls, cloathed in woollen shirts, are indiscriminately mixed, and all drinking, as if for a wager, water from the

Fountain of the Crucifix. On quitting the bath, the company always go with their glasses in their hands, to the ladies walk, in the centre of which, is the ferruginous fountain, from which, custom requires that you should drink three or four glasses of detestable, but eminently stomachic water.

When the different parties of bathers are once assembled together, they seldom separate, but in general order their dinners to be taken to each others lodging. Their walks after dinner are most frequently directed to *Jacquot's Wood* or *Father Vincent's farm*, which is farther among the *Vosges*. It is not merely a delightful country that they seek to enjoy in these walks, they are led partly by curiosity to see one of those uncultivated geniuses, one of those Pascal's of the village, who seem to know by instinct those arts, which others are only able to acquire by study. It is not many years ago since this man, without any model, and without any assistance, constructed from the wood, supplied by his own garden, a piano-

forte, merely from the recollection of one which he had once beheld at Nancy. I have seen the piano-forte which he made, and am enabled to say that it is a prodigy of industry. Several other mechanical works invented and executed by this old man, (who is unable to read) prove that on another theatre, and under other circumstances, he would have been one of the first mechanics of the age. Father Vincent is not only a man of genius, he is a most worthy man, and is held in great veneration in his country, which he equally honours by his talents and his virtues. When the weather is very fine, the company frequently dine under the trees in the Val-D'Ajou, one of the most delightful and picturesque spots that imagination can conceive. This little journey, (which is generally made in a kind of small carts peculiar to the country, called Char-a-bancs) rarely takes place without some of them being overturned, but if any accident happens to the travellers, they can have recourse to the assistance of a peasant of the

Val-d'Ajou who can operate in the case of a broken or dislocated limb as well as the first surgeon in Paris. It is curious to observe this aptitude, this surgical instinct with which all the inhabitants of this valley, from the child to the old man is gifted. At Plombieres as at Spa, at Bath as at Tœplitz, the evening is finished at the card-table, where a man is much more sure of impairing his fortune at night, than improving his health in the morning, by exhausting the fountains.

Before I finish this discourse with the portraits of some of the regular frequenters of watering places, of whom I have found some sketches in my *album*, I must notice three letters which have been written to me upon this subject.

The first is from a fellow-labourer who takes the title of Hermit *de la Chaussée du Maine*. He reproaches me with having forgotten, in translating the four verses of Claudian, which I have taken for a motto, to render *inempta Salus*, (to which words he

seems to attach considerable importance) and he maliciously asks me, "if I have not been forbidden by the faculty?" The second is from an amiable, but scolding correspondent, who affords me an opportunity of atoning for some wrongs which I committed towards her at the beginning of this discourse. Perhaps even now she will not be as fully satisfied with me as I desire.

The third letter is too generally interesting not to be given at full length. It is as follows:

"PAIMBŒUF, *Aug.* 18, 1813.

"Things as well as men, Mr. Hermit, are subject to the vicissitudes of good and bad fortune. Praises are lavished upon such and such waters, which are good for nothing, while of those, which really perform miracles nothing is said. It is in the name of humanity that I entreat, that I call upon you, to communicate to your countrymen the knowledge of the invaluable springs which flow almost unheard of in the heart of Brittany. Although it is not *exactly* known

where the *fountain of youth* is situated, (notwithstanding what has been stated by *Huon de Bourdeaux*, who says that the aforesaid fountain takes its rise in the terrestrial paradise, and by the Spaniard, *Ponce de Leon*, who thought he found it in the Floridas) I see no reason why that celebrated name should not be given to the mineral springs of Dinan, the waters of which, among other singular qualities, have the property of *repairing* the *irreparable* ravages of time. I could prove this extraordinary fact by the evidence of several women who have recovered their youth, provided I could induce them to acknowledge even a past old age. An immense number of experiments of which I have preserved memorandums, prove as clearly as a thing of that kind can be proven, that barrenness (unless indeed, it has been sanctioned a long time by age) is invariably removed by these ferruginous waters. But that which is really miraculous, and must be invaluable to women in their different

conditions, is, that these waters afford to some, the hopes of becoming mothers, and make others forget that they have been so. As you value therefore the health, the glory, the happiness of the fair sex, do, my dear Hermit, use your efforts to bring into fashion next season, the Mineral Waters of Dinan, a small town in Brittany, where I assure you, you are held in great veneration.

I have, &c.

Signed P****,

AN OLD PHYSICIAN.

I publish this letter at present, but shall defer giving my opinion upon the assertions which it contains till next season.

Let us return to our portraits. There are some plants which only thrive in moist soils, and there are some persons who are only to be seen at watering-places; there they seem to be in their element. The types of this species of amphibious animals, are unquestionably a Monsieur and Madame

Despares, whom no one can boast of having seen in any other part of Europe, except Spa, Bath, Tœplitz, Tunbridge, or Plombiéres. They disappear like swallows about the end of autumn, and no one can tell in what country they pass the winter. The first time I saw this couple of birds of passage, the husband was approaching his fiftieth year, and the lady was not above twenty-eight. They were both distinguished for correct and elegant manners and possessed the tone and language of the best company. Despares played enormously high, and the part assigned to his wife was to declaim against this fatal passion, and to endeavour to excite others of a more tender nature. She had a most extraordinary predilection for the Princes of the Germanic Confederation, from the Electors to the Abbé of Stablo inclusively, and it was difficult to be admitted to her society, if you were not qualified to sit in the diet of Ratisbon.

I remember a Canoness of Clai * * *, whom you were much more sûre of finding at Spa than with her Chapter.

* Par trente-six printemps sur sa tête amassés,
Ses modestes appas n'étaient point effacés.

Having determined to forego the sweets of marriage, she had made her arrangements for enjoying the pleasures of celibacy. She regularly visited Spa every year, accompanied by the same lady, and *a new cousin*, who, to prevent all mistakes, and also the necessity of explanation, was called *the cousin of the waters*. D'Erfeuil, who enjoyed the honour of that relationship during the season that we passed together at Spa, wished to enrol me a member of the family for the ensuing season. This amiable lady died about ten years after, at that very place, where she had at least contrived to increase the number of ——— agreeable recollections.

Every one at these watering-places knew the Baron de Ferlus, who called himself a Banker at Hamburgh, though

his signature would not produce a stiver in that city. No one appeared to be more profoundly versed in great commercial speculations. He had correspondents (at least he said so) in every great town in Europe, the names of the most celebrated merchants were always in his mouth, and it was without affectation that he spoke of his immense operations at the last fairs of Frankfort and of Leipsic. The only thing that puzzled his auditors was, to account for the want of judgment of the sovereigns of Europe, in not confiding to him the care of their finances, which made it necessary for him to go every year to a watering place in search of dupes. It is three or four years ago since he met a German nobleman at the waters of *Baden*, in Switzerland, and contrived to persuade him that he had upon one of his estates in Lusatia, immense marble quarries, which, if properly worked, would produce several millions. They entered into a contract upon the subject, and the Baron three or four months afterwards

disposed of his share of the speculation for 80,000 livres to a merchant at Neufchatel, who has since laid out between three and four hundred thousand livres in hunting for these quarries, without having been able to find as much marble as would be sufficient for the construction of a chimney-piece. This man has made and destroyed about twenty fortunes. He one day acknowledged to me that he had not ten louis in his pocket, and at the same time offered to lay me a wager of 1000, that he would return from Bath, where he was going to pass the season, with 100,000 livres in his pocket. I did not accept of a wager which I should have been sure of losing.

For thirty years past *Villebrune* has had no other means of subsistence, than those which he derives from his skill at play, which he only exercises at the most celebrated watering places. His good fortune is so uniform, that one might be inclined to attribute it in some degree to his very *superior address*, if he had not several times

established the fairness of his play with the point of his sword. Villebrune has so often, and so successfully had recourse to this kind of proof, that he has now *convinced* every body without *satisfying* any body.

Watering places have at all times had their poets as well as their physicians. That innocent body, (I speak of the Poets) possess in common, a stock of almost twenty ideas, which make their appearance every year clothed in new rhimes. We always hear of "Flames burning in the midst of the waters," of finding death where we came to seek a cure, and a hundred other prettinesses of the same kind. The coryphœus of those warm-water poets, was formerly the little Abbé de Roquette, who was in such request, that many people took pains to ascertain which spot the Abbé meant to honour with his presence, before they told their physicians what watering place to recommend to them. This *Priestling* who was pale and thin, was very like the Abbé *Voisenon*, whom he endeavoured

to imitate by drinking the waters with a nosegay of pimpernal. The Abbé de Roquette, was at watering places the director of every *fête* and the soul of every pleasure. I shall remember as long as I live, the little theatre which he constructed in two hours at Pyrmont, whither he had invited a company of French players. He had obtained permission from a coach-maker and saddler to make use of his premises, provided he did no injury to the coaches, saddles, &c. He began with taking the bodies of several coaches from their carriages, and arranged them in a semicircle, these were his front boxes, behind them he placed another semicircle of coaches, the bodies of which, being upon the carriages, commanded a view over those in front; a large open coach of the Bishop of Paderborn formed the state box: the saddles put upon the beams of the building constituted the gallery where the company all sat astride. A more grotesque spectacle, or one which

excited more laughter it is impossible to imagine.

I have lately had occasion to know that the watering place poets of the present day are neither less numerous, nor less courted than they were in the time of the Abbé de Roquette. One of them however, last year acquired a character for malignity, which might have been prejudicial to his brethren, by a poem entitled "The Waters of B***." He pretended that these waters possessed the same virtues as the fountain of *Salmacis*, and cited a great number of *Hermaphrodital* unions which they had effected.

The Father of the Waters, the Baron F. died last year at Bareges at the age of ninety-five. This fatiguing mortal who was as much avoided as the Abbé Roquette was sought after, had discovered the art of making the details of the campaigns of Marshal Saxe (under whom he had formerly served) insipid. According to his ac-

count of the battles of *Lawfeldt* and *Roeoux* were gained by his advice. Having attained the rank of brigadier, he quitted the service after the defeat of *Minden*, and as an apology for his conduct, he thought it necessary every year to take the waters, where he told every one, (who would listen to him) for the twentieth time, that "Marshal Contades had been defeated, from not having adopted his plan of the campaign: That the Duke of Fitz-James had also lost a battle, from not having made an attack on the point which he had suggested; and that if it had not been for his efforts, the retreat would have been impossible." All the wars in which France has been engaged for the last half century, all the battles, all the memorable achievements, all the splendid victories, which within that period have embellished our history, are to him as if they had never happened. He stuck most pertinaceously to the *seven years war*, and seemed to think that a cannon had not been fired in Europe since that time.

The appendage to this eternal Baron was a M. D'A*****, who, in consequence of a journey which he made in 1776 to Berlin, had become a ridiculous and extravagant admirer of Frederick the Great. The only advantages which he derived from that journey, were a long Prussian queue, a cane in the form of a crutch, and the rage for taking snuff every moment from his waistcoat pocket. I might in this gallery insert the portraits of a fine lady afflicted with the vapours, whose nervous indispositions become her so well, and which are always so admirably adapted to the age and sex of the witnesses: Of another who came under the care of her mother for the recovery of her health, which would have been equally as well restored any where else, *with a few months patience.*—Of that artful coquette, one of whose chief motives in forming new acquaintances, was the hope of never seeing them again;—but there are some secrets which must not be told, and some truths which it is necessary to suf-

fer to grow old, before they are made public.

People who are always anxious for the conclusion, will ask me what I think of a practice which has grown so general in Europe. I answer, that like many others it has its advantages and its disadvantages, its motives and its pretexts, that it promotes health by promoting pleasure and variety, and that if it is more amusing to point out its abuses, it is easy to enumerate its good effects.

I intend some day to visit all the baths of the capital, and I shall take an opportunity of giving an account of those of Tivoli, an establishment which has not its equal in Europe.

END OF VOL. II.

BARNARD AND FARLEY,
Skinner-Street, London.

THE

PARIS SPECTATOR;

OR,

L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSÉE-D'ANTIN.

CONTAINING

Observations

UPON

PARISIAN MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Translated from the French.

By W. JERDAN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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1815.

BARNARD AND FARLEY,
SKINNER-STREET, LONDON.

TO

FRANCIS FREELING, Esq.

&c. &c. &c.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE Hermit of the Chaussée-d'Antin having, since the commencement of my Translation, published another Volume of his Essays, and thus enabled me to add the following Sheets to my original design, I consider myself entitled to seize the opportunity for a second Dedication. I rather fear that this will be a trespass on you than on my Readers, and my only apology shall be brevity,

and the irresistible impulse which I feel to avail myself of, perhaps, the only chance I may ever enjoy, of so widely declaring how sincerely I participate in the general sentiment which your public and private worth inspires. But it is not because your public Life has procured you

"Golden opinions from all sorts of men:"

the regard and esteem of the highest ranks in this country, and the love and gratitude of your inferiors—it is because in the social circle, as in the discharge of your official Duties, your entire existence is filled with acts of kindness and beneficence; it is because you are so exemplary in

the exercise of all the human affections which dignify man, that I am proud even were it to make an occasion on which I can join my voice to the testimony of all who have the pleasure of knowing you, and stating how grateful your friendship is to one, who is,

Dear Sir,

With the warmest feelings of esteem,

Your's most truly,

WM. JERDAN.

LITTLE CHELSEA,
August, 1815.

NOTICE

FOR THE THIRD VOLUME.

THE Hermit of the Chaussée-d'Antin was, in the first instance, advertised to consist of two Volumes, but the original Author, having in the interim concluded his labours under this signature, and added another Volume to his preceding Publications, it became necessary to suspend the Translation for a short period, and then to depart so much from the first design, as to bring the Work in a complete form before the British Public.

These circumstances will account for the delay which has taken place in producing this Publication, and it is hoped that the Third Volume, thus obtained, will be found to possess merit enough to plead its own cause.

THE

PARIS SPECTATOR;

OR,

L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSÉE-D'ANTIN.

No. I.—21st AUGUST, 1813.

MACEDOINE.

..... Liberius si
Dixero quid, si forte jocosius, hoc mihi juris
Cum venia dabis.

HOR. Sat. 4. lib. 1.

IT is not possible to walk abroad in Paris without observing certain personages whom we have noticed from time immemorial,

and who appear to transmit themselves from generation to generation. This observation, with which I am struck every day, makes me regret that the work under the piquant title of "Remarkable Personages of the Streets of Paris," had not been confided to abler hands. What a crowd of details, anecdotes, portraits, might be introduced to make it delightful? A manual of this kind might be an incomparable appendix to the "Parisian Cicerone;" for it must be as curious to know the originals of this capital as its monuments. Paris has lately suffered two irreparable losses of this order; the first, the celebrated Chevalier de Jean, so renowned for his courage and his creditors, his whims and his debts. True to the beau of the last century, you might find him every day at the Palais-Royal, in tight speckled pantaloons, a horse-shoe wig, and ready to give you the history of the pretty Dutch Jewess that he once set about converting. The other character, carried off still more lately from the curiosity of the amateurs, was the most renowned master

of all our masters in feats of arms, old father Donnadieu.

For twenty-five years he took every day of his life, between two and three in the afternoon, four turns on the Boulevart de la Madeleine. He was distinguishable by the oscillations of his head, the immensity of his riding-coat, the enormousness of his cane, and the antiquity of his wig, that had fewer hairs than even his own skull. Fifty years ago this man used to turn the heads of the handsomest actresses of the Comedie Italienne.

To harangue upon the arts, without knowing a syllable of the subject, is one of our fashionable absurdities. Derval and Senneville are first-rate professors in this.

They have composed for themselves and their disciples a vocabulary of about a hundred words, by the help of which those "Irrefragable Doctors," decide without appeal. "Style without colour, composition without harmony, incorrect drawing, want of light and shade;" this goes equally

to criticism on a poem, a picture, or a piece of music. All that ever comes in the shape of panegyric, no matter what may be the chef-d'œuvre, is equally comprised in the words, "*elegance, vigour, grandeur.*" No doubt these gentlemen have taken the trouble of getting by heart the names of the great masters whom they cite in season, and sometimes not a little out of it: however I have some lingering scepticism about their infallibility, and am not much surprised that a Delille, a Gérard, or a Cherubini, should now and then decline their jurisdiction.

It is a great interval from "l'antre de Procope" such as I remember it in 1754, to the magnificent rooms on the first floor of the Palais Royal, where the Café de Chartres occupies the floor below:

"Ce ne sont que festons, ce ne sont qu'astragales."

"'Tis all festoon and ornament superb."

Gold, ebony, bronze, all are combined with exquisite taste. The bar, all mirrors, is

perfect enchantment. The coffee, the dinner services, silver gilt, the cook an adept in "gastrology;" with all this one might be assured that this new establishment would turn out a fortune. But in Paris, utility, luxury, convenience, even pleasure, are not always sure pledges of getting into vogue. Like fashion, that depends on a caprice often beyond all calculation.

The elegant public, for whose fickleness one thinks himself prepared, is often as much led by habit as the mob. It is often nothing but patience and repeated temptation that can break through the force of custom. They are pleased enough with the café on the ground floor, probably they cannot be prevailed on to be pleased on the first floor, probably they will never go up to try, in spite of the whole magic of promise and invitation. The cafés are in Paris no longer what they were; the frequenters are almost made up of regular idlers and Provincials, and except one or two of those houses, where good company still go by a kind of good luck,

the others are not attended by fashionable people. In the days of Louis XIV. those places were unknown; the rendezvous for even the first classes was the tavern. The young lords of the court, &c. then particularly distinguished the "Cormier" and the "Pomme de Pin." They often slept in those places, and it was even the height of high life, which however men of common sense have in all ages despised, to present themselves at Versailles, with the nose begrimed with snuff, and the drapery in a disorder which shewed where they had been. Our fine women of the present day would probably not have much to dread from this kind of seduction. It is a long time since tavern-hunting has been given over by them to justice, and probably many years will not pass before the public opinion, under their direction, will pass the same sentence on the café.

* * * * * * * * * * * *.

M. Azais is right. Every thing has its balance; goods and evils. If I had the

misfortune to buy, or the folly to read, an enormous volume, entitled * * * * *, in which the author wastes 300 pages in 8vo. in comments on the Fables of a good man, and in proving that there are (which I doubted before,) charming things in this work. If my passion for new books made me fall six months into a heap of typographic follies so overwhelming, I have to thank that passion for putting it in my power to appreciate, among the first, that History of the Crusades with which M. Michaud has just enriched our literature. No work for a long period has come forth with such advantage.

The extreme interest of a subject, of which antiquity offers no model; the thoughts which it excites, the great names which it consecrates, and of which the majority belong to our own annals; the well-conceived plan, not led away by the spirit of system, not fettered by the spirit of party; the style solid, elegant, accurate; those are the qualities which strike me as

eminently distinguishing a work whose composition must give M. Michaud a leading rank among French historians.

Baursalt has written a "Petite Comedie," merry enough, called "Words in Fashion." Of these words, the greater part have disappeared from the Dictionary, others by habit have been promoted to a right to figure there. We have gone through a Neologic irruption, that had "left not a wreck behind." To the mania of new words has succeeded in certain books, in certain theatres, in certain coteries, the abuse of two or three words, perfectly respectable in themselves, but become perfectly absurd by their employment.

It is almost two or three years since the fashionable word was "Nature." An amateur of the Vaudeville made a collection of 226 couplets from pieces of that theatre, in which "Nature," was the *point*. The word, however, lost its rank from the time that a ballad-maker of the Rocher de Cancale parodied the Mania in a song, of

which, I can only remember the last stanza:

In all the scribble
That authors dribble,
In all that quacks
Stretch on their backs;
In all that women
In tricks or trimming;
Above, below,
Display to beau;
Who's the great teacher?
Nature! Nature!
'Tis rather strange, they can't engage
Her, now and then upon the stage!*

For the present day, "Life" is the word of favouritism: it is almost impossible to

* Dans tous leurs ecrits, nos auteurs
Tout l'éloge de "la *Nature*!"
Dans leurs visites, nos Docteurs
Font le procès a "la Nature!"
Nos femmes pour l'habit les mœurs
Le rapprochent de "la Nature!"
Mais en revanche nos acteurs
S'eloignent bien de "la Nature!"

conceive its service to our melancholy ladies, and what a multitude of fine things they can manage by the help of this fragment of sentimentality. "We go up,—we go down the stream of "Life,"—"Life" sits lightly on us.— We reject "Life."—The dream of "Life;" the lingering on the borders of "Life;" the waste of "Life;" the despair of "Life;"—and all this, after having in general taken their full share of "Life," in the gayest sense of the word.

"Ah! how are you, my dear friend; what do you think of doing this evening?" "How can you ask: I am going to the Odeon, of course."—"And so am I."—"There is a new piece for to night, charmingly got up, as I am told."—"You do not mean to go there yet—It is only four o'clock—Come take a turn in the Tuileries." "I have not a moment—I dine in the Rue de Condé, with a friend of mine, who has just lost his wife.—The house is quite a solitude since she is gone."—"And do you dine there?"—"Oh yes, it will be pleasant

to weep for a moment with him: besides I will be there quite wound up for the new piece." "I shall go to the Orchestra, try to keep a place for you, and we shall have our laugh together."

I have not altered a syllable in this little dialogue, I call the parties themselves to witness the fact.

Last Sunday, it rained a good deal. At five, the croud were clustering about the theatre des Varietes, while the unlucky calaches of the Faubourg St. Denis were returning empty, after standing all day on the place Louis XV. to take the curious to St. Cloud. The drivers looked sad at the crowd; at which, the managers of the theatre looked gay; at the same instant, a puppet show-man was dividing the public curiosity with a mourning coach, which carried a poor bibliopolist who had died next door to the theatre. A wedding party were defiling in a train of carriages down the middle of the Boulevart, and in one of the

side alleys a sick wretch, was carrying in a litter to the hotel Dieu! All those contrasts were gathered into the space of a few fathoms, and perhaps I was the only one who perceived that they had any thing of contrast in them.

"I know so well the value of a character," (said E———, some time before his death, to a woman of wit) "that to buy a good one, I would, with all my heart, give all that I am worth in the world." "You would never have made a worse bargain in your life," was the remark.—"How."—"Because if you had to day, the best reputation on earth, it would be gone in a fortnight."

"Cut and dry characters, things that nobody spares;
Come, how nobody knows, and gone, how nobody cares."

"Des réputations, on ne sait pas pourquoi," as Gresset says.

The world never saw before such a heap of those reputations. An exquisite review

might be made out of those borrowed celebrities, the majority of which, have not so much as an excuse. Caritides wrote a huge volume of commentary on the twenty-fourth Ode of Anacreon, which had after all but four verses, and this to prove to people who know nothing about Greek, that he knew it marvellously. True, if this commentary is a chef d'œuvre, it is at least not that of an Incog. For every body knows Caritides. He is a member of twenty-two learned societies, he has titles, places, in short, he wants nothing, but,—merit! I have always in my mind the reputation which St. Aulaire made out in a single stanza. And if the world will still hold him up in the niche where Voltaire fixed him, I must resign in spite of Boileau, the same favour for Cotin; for after all, the Abbe's stanza is fairly worth that of the Marquis. Yet without talking of reputations literary, political, scientific, &c. of which we can at least suspect the *Why*, I must, however, without going beyond the spot, clear up

the matter to myself. *Why* Mercour has got the name of a wit, and has lived for the last ten years on a single bon mot, of which it is not even now quite established that he is the father. *Why* there is a general agreement to attribute the taciturnity of Morneuil to his depth, when the innocent cause is simple poverty of ideas. The fact is, that society must have him a *thinker*. Nature has made him only a dreamer—awake. I am more staggered with the propensity to undervalue the good where it is, than to conceive it where it is not. Females are as much exposed to this as men. One passes for a woman of gallantry, of whom we should be hard put to it, to find a single adventure. Another, with twenty lovers, manages to pass off as a prude. I cannot find out the way of explaining errors of this number, received in society as in controvertible truths, but by saying, that they are talked of for the first time before people who have no interest in giving them a negative; that they are often repeated by

others who are concerned in giving them circulation, and in one word, that in Paris there are "*agencies for characters*, just as there are *agencies for marriages*."

No. II.—28th August, 1813.

SOMNAMBULISM, AND THE ABBE FARIA.

..... Per amicitiam, divosque rogatus,
Ducere me auditum, perges quocumque, memento,
Nam, quamvis referas memori mihi pectore cuncta,
Non tamen interpres tantumdem juveris: adde
Vultum habitumque hominis.

Hor. Sat. 1. lib. 2.

I have often inquired, but never obtained a satisfactory answer to the question,

" Why have that class of men whom the Greeks denominated *Agyrtæ*, the Romans, *Circumforanei*, and we, in rather a vague way, *Charlatans*, always chosen France for the principal theatre of their quackery?" These persons do not think Frenchmen greater fools than other people: should they be imagined less addicted to antiquated rules, more free from the prejudices of custom? They will answer themselves that they are always the last, if not to acknowledge, at least to adopt useful inventions. They will confess that Christopher Columbus in vain begged that he might be allowed the favour of discovering a new world for their advantage; that the vortices of Descartes were maintained for half a century among them against the system of Newton; that innoculation had during thirty years saved hundreds of thousands of European lives long before it was with difficulty introduced into France; that even at this moment, a large proportion of the inhabitants of Paris obstinately persist in drinking the impure

water of the Seine, in preference to the clear filtered beverage which they can procure at the same price; and, in short, that all innovation, bearing a highly-marked character for grandeur and public utility, has ever been in this country the object of the most inveterate and absurd opposition. It is however true that, in revenge, all futile follies, all extravagant theories, all ridiculous schemes, (provided they originate with foreigners) are sure to meet among us with favour, protection, and enthusiastic encouragement. From *Luc Gauric* to the *Abbé Faria* inclusively, I do not know a single foreign *Doctor*, whether he has pricked for his dupes on our quays or in our saloons, whether he has had his companions in the shops or in the palaces, who has not found means to realise a sort of fortune in France. Behold upon the *Place du Louvre* this famous *Doctor Napolitano*, rolling about in his open cabriolet, with his huge perriwig whitened with powder, his full scarlet coat trimmed with gold lace, his embroi-

dered vest, rings upon every finger, and his ample ruffles of Flanders lace; in what does he differ from this most illustrious *Cagliostro* whom we have seen, at the close of the eighteenth century, boast, even in the *Œil de Bœuf**, at Versailles, of being able to make the dead speak, and enrich himself by means of a Phantasmagoria, which when some years after carried to perfection by Robertson the physician, proved the ruin of that individual.

The first and the boldest of the Charlatans who have appeared in France is indisputably,

> ..... Cet Ecossais celebre,
> Ce Calculateur sans egal,
> Qui, par les regles de l'algebre,
> Menait la France à l'Hopital.†

* The anti-chamber of the grand apartment at Versailles, so called from the form of its windows. *Tr.*

† This celebrated Scotsman; this unequalled Calculator, who, by the rules of Algebra, led France to the Hospital.

This prototype of all Charlatans born or yet to be born, escaped from England, where he was condemned to be hanged; in a very few years changed his country, his religion, his condition, and his fortune. After having in vain endeavoured to introduce his *System* into every state in Europe, he at last came to establish it in France:—the result is generally known!

Succeeding the adventurer *Law*, sprung up another adventurer of the name of *Willars*, who made a rapid fortune of many millions (of francs) by bottling the waters of the Seine, and selling them as an universal panacea, which would lengthen human life to the extent of at least a hundred and fifty years. The Parisian wine-merchants are the inheritors of his secret, which they vend however under another name!

Bletton, acquainted with the miracle wrought by the water of the river, thought he might be as successful in drawing the element from its source. He announced the possession of a physical faculty pecu-

liar to himself, by which he could discover, or rather perceive the existence of subterraneous springs, at whatever depth they might be situated, by means of a hazel switch and an able colleague. He succeeded in reviving for a considerable period this pretended science of *Rabdomancy*, which an Ultramontane quack had imposed upon the credulous in a preceding age.

Mesmer burst forth with greater eclat, and with more powerful means than his predecessors; and his triumph was less ephemeral. He had, if you would believe him, discovered a new agent in nature, which he called *Animal Magnetism*. The properties of this agent, by creating new affinities and new relations between men and things, produced miraculous effects. As magnetism operated chiefly upon the nerves and the imagination, our ladies were its earliest converts. The *Tub* of *Mesmer* became the rendezvous of beauties of the court and city: *Magnetism* hatched *Vapours*, *Spasms*, *Nervous Affections*, of a

thousand kinds; and these diseases of the imagination, which seized the physicians themselves, procured proselytes for the German Doctor in the very bosom of the Faculty. Those who most obstinately denied the efficacy of magnetism, perceived however that it was not without its influence on our manners; that it brought into contact many persons who would never otherwise have been seen together; and that the virtue of the *Tub* produced a wonderful effect upon the virtue of women. When the government thought it time to put an end to this comedy, they procured it to be represented on the stage, and the *Modern Doctors* threw into utter discredit the doctors of the day.

This quackery of *Mesmerism*, of which I recollect that Doppat, the pupil of Deslon who had himself been the disciple of Mesmer, ingenuously said, "*Those who are acquainted with our secret, doubt it more than those who are ignorant of it,*" has given birth to Somnambulism, for which, at this moment, the Abbè Faria keeps a

school, to the great scandal of good sense, and of the philosophy which he professes. I was present at the sitting, that is to say, at the public mystification, which took place on Wednesday last, in a house in the *Rue de Clichy*. I shall relate what I saw; it is impossible to represent the matter in a more ridiculous light.

The apostle of *Somnambulism* had chosen the school room of a house of education, as the theatre for the exhibition of his juggling tricks, in the execution of which, he is, as will be seen, far inferior to Olivier.

Before the professor appeared, I examined the assembly; it was brilliant, numerous, and two thirds of it composed of women in the flower of their age. It was easy to see that the greater proportion of them came to the place with very favourable prepossessions towards the new doctrine. I was placed near Madame Maur, and I could discover in that amiable person, the different characteristics which credulity,

confidence, and persuasion, impart to the physiognomy.

The Abbè, accompanied by five or six young girls, appeared in the space reserved for him at one end of the apartment:—his complexion *browned by the fires of the Goa Sun*, did not detract from the regularity of his features; and I thought I could perceive that the most beautiful half of his auditory, seemed in this respect, to have no stronger prejudices than the tender *Desdemona*.

The Orator commenced by a discourse in so grotesque a style, that it was necessary to be a Frenchman, and to recollect that he who spoke was a foreigner, not to interrupt him at the end of every sentence, with bursts of laughter. The course of his ideas, unfortunately was no less ludicrous than the language in which they were expressed: it is almost doubtful, whether human extravagance could go so far. After an eulogium, emphatic to absurdity, on magnetism and its general properties, the

professor laid it down as a principle that this mysterious agent was the basis of all instruction, the foundation of all sciences, the key to all human knowledge. Before hearing this philosoper from the coast of Malabar, who could have imagined that to magnetism appertains, *not only the power of revealing to us the secrets of medicine; and the cause, the seat, and the cure of all diseases; but also that of enabling us to ascertain the configuration, the matter, the motion of the stars, and the nature of their inhabitants?* We may therefore make ourselves very easy on the subject of the future progress of medicine and astronomy; even *morals* need no longer trouble us, for magnetism will be found an ample substitute: "*all the virtues are thence derived as well as all true knowledge, and political science, is itself subject to the action of this extraordinary principle.*" After this luminous definition of magnetism, M. Faria addres sed us on the subject of *Somnambulism*, which is its immediate result. As far as I

was enabled to ascertain from his unintelligible jargon, the state of Somnambulism is for man, and especially for woman, the most consummately blissful;—persons in the condition of Somnambulism develope faculties and information of the possession of which, they are utterly unconscious when awake, such as the gift of tongues, and the second sight; and what is still more wonderful, in particular cases, it even produces new organs. Thus, one of his pupils had attained the peculiar endowment of reading in her sleep, by that part of the human body which the first created man and woman alone did not bring into the world. Unfortunately the proof of this miracle was of a nature not fit for public exhibition!

Other experiments were presented. The four young girls were placed in a row, and the preliminary discourse of the master, had so excellently pre-disposed them to slumber, that the very moment the magnetic rod touched them, they were plunged into the most profound sleep. One of them in her

nap, said she was thirsty: "what will you have to drink," demanded the cajoler,— "Sugared Water." Immediately he presented her with a great glass of clear water which he contented himself with magnetizing, instead of sugaring. The little girl took the glass of water, drank it, and complained that it was too sweet.

The Abbé might have insisted a little upon the benefits which might be derived from magnetism at a period when sugar is so dear; but without noticing the objection made to him, he passed on to a second experiment. "This young person, said he, pointing to one of the sleepers, does not as you may readily believe, understand one word of Latin." Well! in the state of Somnambulism, in which she at present is, you shall see that she can comprehend what is spoken in that language. To prove it:— "*Ars longa, vita brevis.* Answer Miss, what is the meaning of these words?" "*Life is long and short!!*" Loud bursts of laughter broke out on all sides, and the sit-

ting would hardly have been suffered to proceed, had not the motions and the cries of a third Somnambulist fixed anew the attention of the assembly. "*Stop thief! Murder! Stop thief!*" She exclaimed. The magnetizer questioned her.—"What is the matter?"—"A murder in the Rue de Clichy!" "Who are the perpetrators?" "Two men whom I can hardly distinguish!" "Are they arrested?" "Only one of them!" This trick would have excited a considerable sensation, had not many of the company been aware of an event which had taken place three hours before, of which the Somnambulist and the Professor, like other people, had learned the circumstances.

The experiments of members paralysed and *deparalysed* at the word of command given by the magnetizer, finished by exhausting the patience, and disgusting the honest feelings of the spectators. At first, murmurs were heard; these were succeeded by hooting; next, they hissed the Indian

Professor, who very dexterously accounted for the want of success which attended his efforts, by declaring, that the presence of a single sceptic, was sufficient to neutralize the magnetic virtue, and confound the talent of the magnetizer.

I have been desirous in this essay, to answer the reproach which has been applied to me, for not having heretofore, in a work dedicated to the delineation of living manners, devoted a page to the exposure of a doctrine so perfectly absurd and ridiculous. But there can be no danger of its coming into fashion, and we have no cause to apprehend that the steps of Abbé Faria will be followed by any other Professors.

No. III.—11th Sept. 1813.

A HUNTING PARTY.

.....Tu cede potentis amici
Lenibus imperiis: quotiesque educet in agros
Ætolis onerata plagis jumenta, canesque,
Surge, et inhumanæ senium depone Camœnæ
Cœnes ut pariter pulmenta laboribus emta.

Hor. Ep. 18, lib. I.

Yield to the solicitations of your friend, and when he takes out his dogs, his horses, his whippers-in, quit your serious studies to follow him; and allow yourself, like others, the pleasure of supping on your game.

Hunting, it seems, was his delight,
His joy by day, his dream by night.

Somerville.

After love, the chace is perhaps of all the pleasures of this lower world, that

which has been most censured and most praised. Plato calls it a divine exercise; Saint Augustin, a ferocious amusement; Lycurgus recommended it to the Greeks; Moses forbade it to the Jews; Pliny assures us that it gave birth to monarchy; Sallust wishes it to be abandoned to slaves; Buffon would have it reserved for heroes. These contradictory opinions would not have been expressed, but that under the same name, each speaks of a different thing; and this being the case, may they not all be equally entitled to credit.

"It is necessary to preserve the flocks from the jaws of the wolf; to prevent animals from destroying the harvest; it is natural to nourish ourselves with the flesh of some, to clothe ourselves in the skins of others. In these instances then the chace is an useful occupation.

"Among noxious animals there are some to whom nature has imparted the highest degree of strength, cunning, and courage. To destroy these, it is necessary to combat

them; and to master them, the hunter must often risk his life. The chace then becomes a noble amusement, and may in some respects be considered as a school for the military virtues.

"But hunting now-a-days has scarcely any object but to torment in a thousand ways innocent animals, which are carefully multiplied merely for the pleasure of destroying them. This exercise, which has always been the inheritance of certain privileged men, has become the source of much injustice and vexation. A love of the chace degenerates almost always into a passion; it becomes too often the sole occupation of him who gives himself up to it. It is said to improve the health, but it should be added, that it almost always leaves the mind uncultivated. The chace, viewed in this light, is an injurious and culpable amusement."

Thus it is, an action indifferent in itself, considered separately in its principle, in its practice, or in its abuse, may become an

eternal subject of satire or of eulogy.—Locke is right:—to avoid disputes on things, it will almost always be sufficient that we understand each other on words.

Whatever may be the antiquity, the nobleness, and the inconveniences of the pleasures of the chace, it is one of those which I have always found it most difficult to explain, even when I have given myself up to it with most ardour, by false shame, by calculation, or by suitableness. That which was at first but a simple repugnance, has resolved itself into a fixed aversion, from the date of my acquaintance with the Baron de Roncerolles. We met for our common misfortune, about thirty years ago, at the house of one of his relations, in the environs of Dreux.

The Gothic chateau of M. de Cériane, situated in the midst of one of the most beautiful *capitaineries* of the kingdom, was in autumn the rendezvous of all the hunters for thirty leagues round. On entering it, they made a vow to think of nothing but

the chace: and even in the presence of ladies, their conversation was limited to that subject. The old Commander, uncle to Madame de Cériane, whose age and infirmities confined him all day to a large high-backed chair in the drawing-room, knew no pleasure but that of maintaining the superior merit of *falconry*, (which he had the honour of being the last to renounce in France) against Roncerolles, who defended hunting with dogs, with all the force of his habits, and of his lungs. His erudition on this subject surpassed that of all the *Dorantes* and of all the *Clainvilles** in the world. So long as he spoke, (and he desisted from speaking as little as possible) there was nothing to be heard but about the *sole-pleine*, the *pince rondes*, the *biche brehaine*, the *dix-cors jeunement*, the *pied*, and the *contre-pied*†, and all the other

* Characters in the *Fâcheux* and the *Gageure*, two French Dramas.

† These phrases, applied to hinds, barren or with young, to stags, &c.—are not translatable.

barbarous terms, which swell the nomenclature of modern hunting. If he happened to be interrupted for a moment, the old Commander resumed the history and the eulogy of falconry; never failing to assert, in conclusion, that the decline of French gallantry ought to be dated from the invention of small shot. I one day could not help laughing at his peroration somewhat louder than usual. To expiate this offence, he made me endure a description of the finest *bird hunts*, from the reign of Francis I. to the minority of Louis XV. He maintained with the best grace in the world, that the education of the bird of prey, and war, were the only occupations worthy of a gentleman. He could not speak, without sighing, of those happy times, when to charm all the beauties of the court, it was sufficient to know how to fly a falcon; to follow him with all speed; to make him return to the lure, and dexterously to place him on a lady's wrist.—After Francis I., whom he called the *Fa-*

ther of Hunters, the monarch whom the Commander honoured with the next place in his esteem, was the good King John, who was so passionately fond of the chace, that he knew no better way of amusing himself during his captivity at *Helfort,* than to compose with Gacé de la Bigne, his chaplain, a poem on the art of the chace*, *ad usum Delphini.* The Commander had taken the trouble to charge his memory with fragments of it, which it afforded him no small pleasure to recite. This old man, whose head was well furnished with anecdotes and recollections, was listened to with some interest, while recounting his stories till the third or fourth time: but as to the eternal Baron, (whom they had surnamed *the Syndic of Insupportables*) and who never spoke to you but of the different species of dogs—*clairauds, mirauds,*

* "Le Roman des Oiseaux," which the king wrote for the instruction of his son, Philip, Duke of Burgundy.

briffauds; of the manners of the kennel, and of the education of huntsmen; one could not escape ennui in his society, or the persecution of his discourse, without quarrelling with him—(a precaution which I never failed to take, from the morning after my arrival at Cériane, which however did not prevent our again meeting with reciprocal good will). From his exclusive passion for the chace, the Baron derived this advantage, that he had less cause than others to mourn our domestic troubles. In the revolution he only saw an order to go and hunt somewhere else; and he found nothing to complain of on his return to France but the abolition of the ancient ordonnances, with respect to the waters and forests.

After having lost sight of him for so long a period, I was less surprised than I might have been, to meet him lately while on a little journey to Sologne. My old friend, Madame de L**** is proprietor of a magnificent estate in that country, a few leagues from Chambord, where, every

year, at the commencement of the sporting season, her son assembles a numerous and brilliant company of amateurs of both sexes. I arrived there in the night of the 4th of September, and I left it eight and forty hours afterwards, satisfied with the scene of which in that time I had been a witness, and which I shall now endeavour to describe in a way as laconic as possible.

The first person whom I encountered in the morning, on leaving my chamber, was the Baron de Roncerolles. He had been apprised of my arrival, and waited for me in the passage. We met like old acquaintances. He found out that I did not seem a year older than I was when he saw me last; I assured him that he looked fifteen years younger—and why not? Time loses nothing by such assertions, and they always give pleasure. The Baron was in costume; an embroidered waistcoat, with stag's-head buttons; a grey hunting cap; a little sporting knife;—in short, nothing was wanting to make his equipment complete.

He had taken upon himself to make all the preparations for the next day's sport, and had just been determining on the rendezvous, and the halting-places. He attached, he said, the more importance to the success of that day's chace, as he had provided the equipage of young de L * * * * *, and as General de G * * * * (the greatest sportsman in France) was to be of the party.

The poor Baron had to endure a sharp scolding at breakfast, for having taken it into his head to have a rehearsal of the horns on the terrace of the castle before noon, regardless of the ladies, who were still asleep after having played at cards till two in the morning. The remainder of the day he was perpetually in motion. He went from the kennels to the stables; he entered the names of the sportsmen; gave his orders to the huntsmen and whippers-in; and returned to the saloon to consult the barometer.

The time of setting out was fixed for seven o'clock on the following morning.—

At five the Baron was up, and had awaked every body in the chateau. After having been himself to couple the dogs, to separate the relays, and to place the old pack, at the entrance of the forest; he returned to the stables to saddle the horses and to harness the calashes, and have them brought to the steps of the terrace. He at length returned to the castle, to commence the round of the corridors. Nothing could be more amusing than to see him running from door to door; calling each lady by her name, telling *each* in particular, that the party only waited for *her;* and not giving himself a moment's repose, till all were assembled in the vestibule. He then mounted his horse, and made his troop defile before him. I accompanied them to the forest, saw them enter the wood to the sound of the horn and the yelping of the dogs, and then retraced my steps, peaceably to await their arrival at the chateau.

Towards three o'clock a great noise of horses and of carriages, announced the re-

turn from the chace, and I hastened to quit the library, to see the hunters take off their boots. I could not yet discover the Baron, but I heard him hollowing and raving like one possessed of a devil, in the midst of the valets and huntsmen, while the ladies descending from the calashes, repeated with bursts of immoderate laughter — "*At fault!** *At fault!*" At these words, with which they saluted the Baron on his entrance; he flew into the most ludicrous passion imaginable. "*At fault!*" repeated he, (gnashing his teeth, and wiping his forehead, without perceiving that he had taken off his wig with his cap,) "Have I come to this place, to hear those words!——Laugh as much as you please; the affront is not to you ladies, but to me, who have been forty years a sportsman, and have a character to preserve. I would rather have received twenty stripes from a horsewhip across my back, than have expe-

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* *Buisson Creux!*

rienced such humiliation. As for the rest;" (added he, walking off,) "if these gentlemen understood nothing of the chace, it is not at all astonishing—*Where the devil should they have learned any thing about it?*" Each retired to his apartment to rest himself and to dress.

The dinner bell rang, and we all met at table; and some of the ladies, more fond of mischief than the rest, revived the conversation on the "*At fault*" of the morning, by maintaining that the mistake that had been made, was the error of the Baron. "My error," exclaimed he, rising, "I will be judged by the general.—I had fixed on my stag the evening before. It was a six antlered one. I drew the hounds on to the scent. The game starts. M. Saint Alphonso who is present, and had brought his pack with him, maintained from a view of his slough, that it was a full aged stag. I saw from that moment, that I had to do with a man who was a stranger to the first principles of the art. This is not surprising,

where should he have learnt it?" (the company laughed,) "The pack of the Chateau caught the scent—it is composed of forty dogs with fine noses, *well matched* and hunting in full cry; I was quite sure of it. The stag beat a long time about the wood. We traced him through his windings; at length we turned him out. We were then at fault. The pack of M. Saint Alphonso had got on a wrong scent. I wished to break the dogs off from it, and force them away—impossible! these babblers knew nothing of hunting." *Where should they have learnt it?*" asked the mistress of the house, and this was the signal for a general laugh. The Baron nevertheless went on: "I wished to call them off; he maintained that we should follow them, and that his pack was in the right. The dogs parted, I backed the *good* and cried *hourvari* on the others. Two rascals of huntsmen as knowing as their master, took upon themselves to sound their horns. The whole pack went wrong, the scent was altogether

lost—the hunt was sent to the devil. Now I would ask, who was in fault?"

After this fine discourse, of which, the ladies could understand nothing, the Baron quite out of breath, resumed his seat. Saint Alphonso who wished to defend his huntsmen and his dogs, displayed in turn his sporting erudition. The quarrel became very animated, the ladies who were amused by it, did all in their power to heighten it, and the General who had been made the umpire, disposed of the question, by proposing two new hunting parties, over one of which, each of the adversaries should preside. I took my departure without waiting to know who proved victor in the end.

I shall now return to my subject, by transcribing one of the letters, which I received after writing my first essay on the chase. The only change I shall make in it, will be to omit some of the too flattering compliments which my correspondent has addressed to me.

" *Paris, 13th, September.*

" *M. Hermit,*

" Your observations on manners, breathe fine morality, have an agreeable gaiety, and are written in an easy natural style. I delight much in reading them, and am sorry we have so long to wait for them. I could wish that after the example of your predecessor, Addison, you would give us a paper every day, in which we could comment upon, and discuss your propositions, for one pointed essay, invites an answer, as a witty conversation invites us to take a part in it. I, for example, have many things to say to you on the subject of your *little* philippic against the chace. Without saying so much about it, I am little less passionately devoted to it, than your Baron de Roncerolles. This taste is confirmed in me by gratitude, as you shall judge from my history.

" Educated in the country under the eyes of my father and mother, by a precep-

tor of merit, whose care was rewarded by the rapid progress of his pupil, on approaching my sixteenth year, my health became much impaired; I had palpitations of the heart, and my nights were sleepless. My mother, alarmed, consulted her physician on my case. He was a sensible man, and after a few questions, he called for a pen and ink to write his prescription, which was as follows:

"'℞. *A double barrelled gun, a powder horn, a game bag, and a pointer, the whole to be taken every morning for four or five hours.*' Ye children of the cities, whom less innocent amusements, occupy from the cradle, can form no idea of the first perfectly pure pleasure, tasted at an age when enjoyments of a different character are open to us. My delight in the chace partook of madness. Each step of my dog, made my heart beat with violence, and I think, (God and the fair sex forgive me!) I have never felt, on arriving at the place of rendezvous with the woman I most loved, so much

anxiety and rapture, as I have experienced when on seeing the hare or the fox quit the covert, to pass to the spot where I was squatting on the watch for him. I again tasted refreshing sleep: my health and gaiety returned, I finished my studies, and set off for my regiment.

"We were then at war. I made three campaigns, and passed two winters in a good garrison; after which, thanks to the fatigues of the one, and the pleasures of the other, I returned to my paternal home, so reduced and so changed, that my parents hardly knew me. The doctor was called in again, and gave me the same prescription as before, 'your health is but slightly affected,' said he to me, 'it will be restored by moderate exercise, which is equally good to supply strength, and to consume excess of it.' I followed his counsel and regained my youth.

"I found myself so well, that I soon became passionately enamoured of a young lady in the neighbourhood, and it was not

long before I discovered that I had a rival. My folly was such, that I gave myself up to despair. I became melancholy, hardly spoke, and could not eat. I passed the day in writing letters, which were not received, and the night, in wildly pacing my chamber, meditating scenes of romance, and projects of vengeance. As mad as *Orlando*, I was lost in my passion as for an *Angelica* and *Medora*, if the dear doctor had not come once more to my assistance; '*love* and *jealousy!*' said he, 'I know of but one remedy for these fatal maladies.'—'Death!'—'The chace, zounds the chace.'—'But I shall find no pleasure in it now.'—'It is not pleasure you want, but it is fatigue. Do you not see that the repose of your body nourishes the inquietude of your soul; the only cause of your present indisposition. Exercise your limbs, that is the way to set your mind at rest, to restore your appetite, and to extinguish your passions.' I resumed my gun; I again declared war against the rabbits,

and before the close of the autumn, I was so well cured of my love, for my fair neighbour that I went to law against her for the right to a warren.

"Some time after this, my father succeeded in marrying me to a rich and noble heiress. My wife had great virtues and talents, but as a set off against these, her face was singularly plain, and her temper was excessively tiresome. I soon conceived an aversion for her, and unfortunately she felt for me a sentiment exactly the reverse. We understood each other on no one point, yet she undertook to coincide with me in every thing. If I took up a book, she read. If I approached the piano, she begged of me to accompany her; and as she had a habit of not singing correctly, though she was a great musician, she made my passion for music, a real punishment. I thought to escape by riding out on horseback, but she took no respite, and never quitted the riding school, till she had qualified herself to follow me. I hardly knew what saint to

invoke, to help me out of this conjugal hell, when I happened to recollect the doctor and his panacea: From that time, I gave myself up without reserve to the only exercise my wife could not share with me. She wished to accompany me, but I led her '*so far—so far*,' (as the Fairy Tales say) that she was obliged to decline such excursions, and thus the chase saved me once more. When I had thus exercised myself all day, I had a good excuse for silence and sleepiness at night. Obliged to separate from me, she has created new occupations for herself, her tenderness has become more calm, and we have finished by living together in a very tolerable manner.

"You will agree M. Hermit, that with such reasons for loving the chase, I may be excused for taking upon myself its defence, and for endeavouring to remove from you those prepossessions, which you appear to entertain against this exercise.

I have the honor to be, &c.

The Baron de la Gibeciere."

I have established a little tribunal, in which I have no functions to perform other than those of a mere recorder; I interrogate the parties, I publish the facts, draw my conclusions, and leave the decision to the public. My correspondent pleads in favour of the chase. He has ably set forth its advantages; I proceed to exhibit its inconveniencies and folly.

Some of my readers, may perhaps still remember the *Abbé Vincent*, with whom a taste for the chase had become a real madness. After having for a long period sought the means of associating the *decorum* of his profession, with his ruling passion; he at length discovered them with the assistance of a skilful gun-smith in the *Rue de la Harpe*. This person invented expressly for the Abbé, a gun, of which the breech took off, and could be put in the pocket. By means of an ivory knob, made to fit one end of the barrel, and a brass ferrule which went on the other end of it, the gun covered with a fine japan varnish, was pre-

sently transformed into a cane. The Abbé with his cane in his hand, and a prayer book under his arm, a bob wig, and a violet coloured coat, used to leave Paris every morning in the sporting season, satisfied that in this costume he could only be supposed to be a curate of some neighbouring parish, returning on foot to his parsonage. No sooner did he approach a heath, a wood, or any other place stocked with game, than he put his gun in order; and drew from his pocket a small spaniel of an excellent breed, which instantly went in quest of prey. Ponto, with his nose to the ground, and wagging his tail, gave notice to his master that the game was at hand. The bird rose, a shot from the fowling piece brought it to the ground. The dog who carried it to the sportsman, was immediately put with the prize in his pocket, and the game-keepers who on hearing the report of the gun, were attracted to the spot, found only the Abbé walking with a cane in his hand, and reading his prayer book. The ecclesiastical poacher passed

on to another estate, where he amused himself in the same way, and this he continued till he had filled his enormous pouch, which served him for a game bag.

The rigour of the ancient ordonnances, restricted the rights of enjoying the sports of the chase, to the class of nobles and to the great land owners. These laws the peasant and the citizen could not but at much risk and peril venture to infringe. More conformable to the general, as well as to individual interest, the existing code allows every one after the harvest, to make war on the game on his own lands. From the beginning of the month of September the castles and country houses are filled with sportsmen. They awake before day-break;—the guns, the game bags, the ammunition boxes are arranged at the door. They go from the village—their dogs open and disperse about the country, each seeking by sun-rise to discover the seats of the hares by the little vapour which rises from the place where they have passed the night. The alarm is given to the inhabitants of the

woods—the dogs are in pursuit of them—the sound of fire arms succeeds, and the game bags are filled. The rendezvous has been agreed upon—the breakfast hour arrives; all haste to share the bread, the dried tongue, and the veal pasty which the servants have been busied in providing. Each gives and receives his share of eulogium and criticism. "Such a prize has been missed by the fault of one person; one would give his best shot for that of his neighbour, whom he has seen bring down two partridges by a back-handed fire.—Another has made nothing but blunders; he is in ill-luck," (for sportsmen like gamblers, have their prejudices and their superstitions). Breakfast being finished—the ozier bottle which contains a little rum, passes from hand to hand, and is the signal for departure. They return to the field—the sun shines with all its force—the heat is insupportable, it is a punishment to course the plain.—No matter, they have agreed to *amuse* themselves till four o'clock. It is

yet but noon. The game seeks cover in the thickest bushes. The sportsman exhausted with fatigue, can find no more; and looks in his turn for a commodious sheltering place. His gun placed against a tree, on which he hangs his game bag, his dog at his feet, he lays himself down for a nap, and sleeps; but the perpendicular rays of the sun, darting full on his nose, and the swarm of flies which walk over his face, soon awake him, and with eyes half open, he returns to the chase, and the carnage recommences among the rabbits and partridges. At length the village clock announces the hour of four, and the sportsmen assemble to make a triumphal entry on their return. The ladies seated round a large table in the dining room, receive the hunters, who proudly display the trophies of the day—quails, partridges, rabbits, and hares, which they present to them. It is there that the game is shared, and made into different parcels by the huntsmen—the presents are forwarded to their destination,

and the cook of the house takes possession of the choice pieces set apart for the next day's dinner.

Buffon has declared himself the apologist of the chase. If we may believe him "*it is the only amusement which makes a diversion from business, the only relaxation without effeminacy, and the only one which affords lively pleasure without languor, without alloy, and without satiety.*" Ladies have in France a decided aversion for this species of amusement, which appears to them destructive of all society, of all conversation, and of all sentiment, and which accustoms men to seek, removed from them, pleasures in which they cannot participate. There is at least as much exaggeration in their complaints against the chase, as in the praises bestowed upon it by the philosopher of Montbard. I should however have less difficulty in pointing out a motive for the one, than in offering a justification for the other.

There is no defect, no excellence, no

custom in France which is not parodied. The passion for the chase is travestied at Paris in the most ridiculous manner, by some little shop-keepers. Can there be any thing more grotesque than that honest grocer in the *Rue de la Verrerie,* whose shop is watched by a hunting dog, and who rising above the vulgar taste of his family, waits till Sunday to course the fields, and takes the chance of killing a lark or a water-wagtail. How proudly does he walk through Paris, his gun under his arm, his hunting cap on his head, his buff gaiters, and his sporting jacket, made at the expense of an old coat the skirts of which have been cut off. How graciously does he smile on his neighbours! How loudly does he call after *Diana* or *Castor,* though the animal has not been a yard from his heels! At last, he has reached the plain of St. Denis, pursuing from bush to bush, the wood-pecker, the linnet, and even the tender nightingale, which he sometimes kills by chance with a random shot. But more frequently the whole morning

passes away without his having to reproach himself with the death of the smallest bird. Meanwhile the dinner hour approaches, and he knows that they expect the produce of his chase at home, to make some addition to their humble *bouilli*. In this dilemma, the unfortunate sportsman, resolves to repair to the Palais-Royal, and to hunt there, purse in hand, in the shop of a poulterer, from whom he purchases two partridges, which he puts into his game bag, taking good care to pull the feet through the meshes of the netting. The grocer then goes home, and with an air of triumph, presents to his wife, the partridges which he has shot. Unluckily, however, a lusty country cousin, who comes every Sunday to keep his wife company, causes her to remark that one of the birds has been caught in a net, and that the other exhales a high scent, which betrays the remote era of its death.

No. IV.—23d Oct. 1813.

REVOLUTIONS OF FASHION.

Tout change—la raison change ausi de méthode,
Ecrits, habillemens systèmes, tout est mode.
RACINE Fils—Epit. à Rousseau.

Forms fluctuate still—resistless fashion's sway,
Arts, habits, wit, and wisdom's self, obey.

Je loue l'industrie d'un peuple qui cherche a faire payer aux autres ses propres mœurs et ses ajustemens; mais je le plains de se laisser lui-même si fort piper & aveugler à l'autorité de l'usage present; qu'il soit capable de changer d'opinions et d'avis, tous les mois, s'il plait à la coutume—on dirait que c'est quelqu 'espèce de manie qui lui tourneboule l'entendement.
MONTAIGNE.

I applaud the industry of a people that tries to make its own habits and manners pass current with the world; but I find fault with their suffering themselves to be entangled and blinded by the authority of the reigning custom. Those who are capable of changing their whole system of opinions every month, as the fashion may be, are only to be spoken of, as labouring under a disease which perverts the brain.

IT is rather with a feeling of pleasure, than of vanity, that I find an enterprize prosper

in my hands, in which so many men of merit have successively failed, during the last age: the small share of success obtained in their time by the *Spectateurs*, *Observateurs*, and *Epilogueurs* of France, led many to imagine that our national vanity, revolted from this species of magic lanthern, by which a skilful moralist, more or less severe, might produce every week, a faithful picture of some of our vices, our occupations, and our follies. I imagine, on the contrary, that it is to a want of fidelity in these portraits, that we must ascribe the cold reception which they have hitherto experienced. L'Abbé Prévost, Marivaux, and their imitators, have considered, if I may so express myself, mind and morals in an equal degree with manners, but they have not particularized the habits of their contemporaries; there is nothing determined, nothing of locality in their delineations: their site is every country; their personages are of every age—I confine myself to a less extensive circle; and in compensation for all the advantages which these writers possess

over me, I shall excel *them* in that of fidelity, or at least in appositeness.—I design what I see; I trace characters which I have under my eye; and to be more certain of the resemblance, I cast my figures from living nature.

My task, I confess, becomes every day more easy; and it frequently happens, that my correspondence supplies me with the germ, the matter, and sometimes even, as in the following letter, with the substance of my discourse.

"*My dear Hermit,*

"I live secluded, unknown: I love to reflect, to observe; and as often as remarks occur to me; I amuse myself with noting them down; but as Marmontel remarks, 'It is melancholy to contemplate a fine prospect, without being able to say to some one; What a fine prospect!' It gives me pleasure on this principle, to communicate my ideas to you, and I set about it with less scruple, as, in consequence of your

being totally unknown, you are not obliged to treat me with the slightest ceremony, but you may at once do justice on my letter, for any little fatigue it may occasion you, by throwing it into the fire.—This premised, M. Hermit, let us have some chat together.

"Tell me, if you know why my dear compatriots, whom Voltaire in his moments of humour, called *Welches*, but who are not the less celebrated for the excellence of their taste and the richness of their imagination—why, I ask, are the French of all people, most apt to delight themselves with certain retrospects, with a set of reiterated ideas, so as to make the most ridiculous application of them to present customs and manners? Are we children, who cannot admire any object, without wishing to lay hold of it? Reason informs us that every people, every age, and every country, has its peculiar characters; that whatever we borrow from either, must be delicately modified, in order to avoid the fabrication of

disgusting absurdities; and that servile imitation is the unerring sign of mediocrity. In proportion to the justice of this reflection we are astonished at the vicious extravagancies of fashion in France, during some years past.—After having been muffled up successively in Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Asiatic rags, she now presents herself speckled with all the colours of chivalry. A little while since, we were enamoured of the Antique, at present, nothing is endured but the Gothic. I shall not examine whether, in character, we are now more essentially, *Knight's-errant*, than we were formerly *Romans*; I regard only the ridiculous side of our metamorphosis. I wish only to take off the habit, and it is not my fault, if, like the robe of the Centaur Nessus, it should stick to the skin.

"I am intimate with a solicitor, who, in arranging the business of others, has done his own so effectually, as to have realized a considerable fortune, which he enjoys with his children and his wife. I

know of no fault in the lady, except that of being the slave of fashion, nor can I accuse my friend of any weakness, except that of being, in this respect, the slave of his wife. Nature has given him a thick, short person, and chubby-cheeks; he wears spectacles, and false hair, flying on each side of his head like pigeon's wings. I leave you to imagine the figure he must have made, during some years in a bed-chamber, furnished entirely à la grecque, and ornamented on each side with basso-relievos, representing the adventures of the gallant Alcibiades. It is still more ludicrous when one calls to mind the canopied bed, shadowed by a cloud of muslin, and sustained by swans and cupids, where I have been accustomed to see him every morning, in a wove cotton night-cap, and an Indian dressing gown.

"I visited him on my return from a very long voyage. In six years, twenty ages had passed over his house. I found him in a library, the windows of which, in ara-

besque, admitted but a doubtful and fatiguing light through their vitriolated colours.

His books (all on legal subjects) were ranged on lacquer'd shelves, surmounted by escutcheons, on which one was surprized to meet with such devices as the following:

La science est folle parole;
Ne suivons que d'amour l'ecole!

Leave science to the pedant fool;
Be joy your study; love, your school.

Or:—

Amour abat orgueil des braves!

Valour itself submits to love.

Or:—

Tout pour les dames!

All for the ladies;

and other conceits of a similar kind. I fixed a day to dine with him, *en famille*, and the family was assembled on my arrival, in the saloon, and formed one of the most grotesque groups I ever beheld. My friend's father, in a flowered drugget, and a large curled wig, was seated in a kind

of curule chair; the master of the house, who had an engagement with his wife, to a nobleman's route in the evening; was dressed altogether in the French style; he was seated, or rather squatted on a very low Ottoman, which extended all round the saloon. The lady, in a Medician robe; had an Indian shawl wrapt round her arm: her daughter was habited in the Greek, her son in the English costume, and the younger children in that of the Mamelukes.

"I had hoped to console myself for the capricious fluctuations of fashion, in contemplating the immutable beauties of art. I had left our school of painting at its most flourishing epoch, when David, Gerard, and Girodet had revived these fine forms, and that grand style of antiquity, of which, I am an idolater. I entered *a saloon;* I saw nothing but gothic monuments, obscure arches, women buried in velvet, and men imprisoned in steel. I stopped with the multitude, before a picture, in which every face, masked in a visor, left me nothing to

recognise for a human countenance, except the squinting eyes and flat nose of our gallant Duguesclin; a personage whose virtues were better adapted for historic illustration, than his features for pictorical effect. 'I had once repeated, with a lively author, whom idleness, unluckily, had led to the muses: 'Who will deliver me from the Greeks and the Romans!' I now exclaimed, on recollecting myself: 'who will deliver me from the French knight's-errant!'

"I had not indeed, found shelter from their attacks, when I set out on a country excursion, proposing to visit a friend who possessed a small estate at some leagues distant from Paris. I learned that he had sold this agreeable property, in order to purchase an old castle, the cradle of an illustrious family to which he had taken it into his head that he was related. Thither he had repaired to celebrate the majority of his eldest son. I proceeded, not in the highest spirits, for

this noble mansion, situated at the extremity of lower Britanny. I arrived, after having been overturned three times in the neighbourhood of Quimperlé. It took me a quarter of an hour to wind round a pinnacled wall, flanked with towers and turrets: I at last found the draw-bridge, which I passed without opposition, though somewhat disconcerted at not having an esquire to sound a horn. I announced myself to the governor's only servant, who was dusting his masters coat in the *armoury*. After a long circuit through the obscure corridors of this vast edifice; I found M. N *** in an apartment, of which most of the rafters were naked; it was ornamented, however, with family portraits, and some black leather chairs, on which it was necessary to mount in order to look out of window. Our conversation during two days, turned on the nobility and traditions of the place. He gave me an airing in a calash, drawn by the horses of the farm, on a plain where jousts and tournaments were formerly held.

In a superb chapel, half of which had recently tumbled down, I heard mass from a priest, whose *chasuble* was made out of an old piece of *Utrecht* velvet. We dined tolerably well with the mayor, a justice of the peace, and a tax-gatherer, in what was formerly called the servant's hall; I slept, as well as may be imagined, to the music of owls and rats, in an old bed, with flowered hangings, in which, it seems, the Constable de Clisson formerly reposed; and I resumed with infinite satisfaction, my route to Paris, cursing the coldness of my imagination, which rendered me more sensible of the absurdity resulting from an incongruous association of things, than of any interest attached to the *times*, the *persons*, and the recollections which they recall.

A. P."

This letter, the malice and the gaiety of which I leave my readers to appreciate, will serve as a preface to a very short dissertation on Fashions, in which I propose to pass in rapid review, the principal revo-

lutions which they have undergone in France, and the absurdities which they have successively introduced in their train.

Among other contrasts which compose the French character, the most striking and inexplicable, is that taste for variety, and that passion for routine, which our nation only has found the secret of uniting. It is from this compound principle that we change the form of our habits and our furniture, two or three times in an age; and that half Paris still prefers to drink at the same price, the brackish water of the Seine, to water which has been crystallized. We are discussing however, the question of fashion, not of routine, and we will not wander from the subject. If we wish to form an idea of the different revolutions of our costume since the origin of the monarchy, it is in the museum of the *Petits-Augustins*, that we ought to commence our study. We there perceive that the Roman *Chlamyde*, the coat of the Sicambres, and the amice or hood, formed during two or three ages,

the vestments and the head-dress of the early French. In these distant times, the different classes of society were distinguished by the amplitude, the quality, and the trimmings of the chlamyde, the form of which, towards the end of the seventeenth century, began to exhibit a visible alteration. Silk was exclusively reserved for princes and persons of the highest distinction: the inferior orders were restricted to the use of camlet and woollen. As far as we are enabled to judge from some shapeless monuments of art, (repplunged at this period into barbarism) which furnish us with the only authorities we can collect respecting these remote ages, our ancestors manifested the same inconsistency of taste, with which their descendants have since been so loudly reproached.

That protection demanded by industry, and the just bounds within which luxury ought to be restrained in a poor state, had fixed the attention of the sage Louis IX. "*It is proper*," said that prince in his instructions to his son, "*that every one should*

dress according to his condition. A man whose only object is to please his mistress ought to be handsomely attired; and his general appearance should be such that old people shall not reproach him with ostentation, nor young ones with meanness."

Philip *le Bel*, in the following age, revived in full vigour the ancient sumptuary laws, in order to repress the luxury of the *bourgeoise*, who affected at this time an equality with the court: chariots were interdicted to the bourgeoise women, and they were forbidden, under the penalty of fines, to be attended with wax torches when abroad at night: furs of certain qualities and jewels were reserved for the nobility: gilt girdles became the exclusive appendage of courtezans, and honest women consoled themselves by repeating the proverb,

"Bonne renommée vaut mieux que ceiture dorée."

"A good name is better than a gilt girdle."

This sumptuary law has been exploded, and

we have retained the proverb, but without making any deductions from it. A man of letters and of wit (this expression involves no pleonasm) started, some years since, the ingenious idea of composing a history of France in ballads, not according to the project of certain hungry poetasters who propose to reduce into doggerel rhyme and set to the airs of the Pont-neuf, the elements of grammar, of physic, and even the articles of the civil code; but in combining by an historical commentary the various songs, carrols, and satirical couplets, which have appeared at different periods of our history, and which are connected with its principal events. The *Satire Ménippée* contains a great number of satirical couplets, to which we are indebted for a multitude of anecdotes respecting the *League*, which we should in vain search for any where else. The *Mazarinades* are the true memoirs of *La Fronde*, and have this advantage over all others, that they render us, as

it were, contemporary with that epoch of intrigues, by transporting us into the midst of those personages who acted the principal parts in it.

An universal history of fashions, executed on the same plan, would undoubtedly be one of the most interesting and original works which has yet been published. Nor can the slightest imputation of frivolity be attached to such a subject, considered in its necessary relationship to manners, to laws, and the general spirit of ages and nations.

In contemplating the Orientals, under a burning sky, covered with pelisses, shawls, and stuffs of all kinds; in observing their feet, which play in their ample slippers, may we not pronounce, without farther investigation, that these are a lazy and indolent people? Who cannot perceive in the Dutchman, in his blue compact habit, in his round unpowdered wig, the man of œconomy, laborious, and destitute of imagination? In the Hungarian, beneath

his rich and martial costume, a character fierce and independent? Is not the ancient Greek dressed, or rather ornamented, in habiliments most favourable to beauty, the proper representative of a people who held the sceptre of arts? If the character of nations discovers itself in their fashions, we may likewise recognize in them the grand epochs of their history. Among ourselves, for instance, does not every revolution in manners reflect itself in our habits? During the first ages, Charlemagne, who appears with his hair cropt square across his neck, with a woollen tunic embroidered with silk, a sheep-skin mantle clasped after the manner of the Roman emperors, and with sandal shoes; does not this combination suggest to us the idea of barbarism, mingled with an impression of high cultivation? Are we not taught to recognize in him the conqueror who assumed the title of Augustus, and who appropriated for sale the eggs of his poultry-yard, and his garden-vegetables? In the days of Feudalism, when

war was the only science, and when there was no rank below nobility, men were clad in iron, and women in their husbands coats of arms. One side of a petticoat, of a lady of the house of Dreux, was occupied by a *martlet*, and the other by a *crescent gules checked with ermine*. Women, if we may so express it, lived under the buckler which defended them. During the succeeding ages, the progress of arts and intelligence exhibited itself in the reigning modes, which were characterized by an elegant capriciousness, a species of pomp, the offspring of chivalrous imagination, and of Spanish genius modified by French taste; and this composed, at the time of Francis I., the most picturesque costume which this nation has ever adopted. Louis XIV., whose personal character had so much influence on that of his age, accomplished, at the expence of taste, but to the great advantage of the nobility and of gravity, a complete revolution in the fashions of his time, wherein majesty did not always

display itself divested of charlatanery.—After him, both manners and habits lost their nobility, and retrograded from simplicity: the spirit of society made great progress, urbanity began to generalize, but public manners grew corrupt, and those licensed freedoms which good taste condemns became established. The French costume, short and scanty, preserved nevertheless something of elegance. In proportion as the different classes confounded themselves with each other, good sense, good taste, and the distinction of manners disappeared from society, and an eccentricity in fashion preceded by some years that more serious extravagance, which the nation was preparing itself to exhibit. While the men, less culpable in the interim, equalized themselves by the frock, the women emulated each other in self-disfigurement, by the immeasurable height of their headdresses. The revolution arrived: superfluous ornament was then so retrenched that the body was left almost naked; in the

same degree that the moral licentiousness of the times discovered the vices of the soul.

In the immense picture of great events, produced by little causes, fashion necessarily occupies a considerable place. One of the greatest misfortunes which France has had to lament, the divorce of Louis *le jeune* from Elinor of Guyenne, resulted from the fashion, which this prince wished to introduce, of shaving his chin and cropping his head. The queen, his wife, who appears to have possessed, with a masculine beauty, considerable acuteness of intellect, observed with some humour, *that she imagined herself to have espoused a monarch, not a monk.* The obstinacy of Lewis in shaving himself, and the horror conceived by Elinor at the sight of a beardless chin, occasioned France the loss of those fine provinces which constituted the dowry of this princess; and which, devolving to England by a second marriage, became the source of wars which desolated France

during 400 years. Among many other subjects of hatred which the French nation bore to Charles the bald, may be counted the singularity which he affected in his dress. His Greek habits completed his alienation from the hearts of his subjects; and were in part the cause that no one exerted himself to punish the crime of the jew Sedecstas, who poisoned him.

It is principally on the hair of the beard that the caprices of fashion, among us, are exercised. Short and long locks, the beard thick or shaven, *la royale* or *le barbichon*, mustachios turning up or down, all these modes, which have varied the French physiognomy into a hundred different appearances, are of illustrious origin; the close crops of the reign of Francis I. were occasioned by a wound which this prince received in the head, and which obliged him to have his hair cut off. The beautiful hair of Louis XIV., when a child introduced the use of peruques with long floating curls. The enormous wigs which suc-

ceeded to these, which were adopted by all Europe, but which have now become a mere appendage of the magistracy, were invented towards the end of the seventeenth century, by a celebrated wig-maker, named Duviller, in order to conceal a slight inequality in the shoulders of the Dauphin.

Mustachios were elevated into a great importance, in the sixteenth century. The Spaniard borrowed on the credit of his mustachios, and the Frenchman swore by them. "*I have great esteem,*" (says an author of this period) "*for a young man, who is anxious to equip himself with a handsome pair of mustachios, and who considers that time well employed, which he devotes to their cultivation; in proportion as he attends to them, his soul will be capable of great and heroic actions.*"

Mustachios, on the contrary, seem to have been considered by the historian, Grainger, as a sign of declination. "*The beard,*" says he, "*degenerated into mustachios under the reign of the two Charles's*

of England, and disappeared entirely with James II., as if its destruction had been allied to that of the house of Stuart." The strength of the Stuart's, might perhaps have lain in their beards, as that of Samson did in his locks; nevertheless, we may be permitted to believe that the talents and valour of the Prince of Orange, and the extreme weakness of his father-in-law, contributed to the ruin of this family, at least in an equal degree with the discredit which its chief had attached to mustachios.

A multitude of volumes have been written on head-dresses and beards; and this part of our fashions has been followed in all its variations; these researches, which have been of considerable utility to artists, have not supplied any assistance to the historian. The best thing which was ever said on the subject of beards, is that of Henry IV. "the wind of adversity has blown on my beard."

Fashion is the empire of women—it owns no law but their caprice; but the extrava-

gance of its fluctuations has not always been reconcileable to the strictest idea of delicacy. I shall cite, among many examples of the fantastic taste, that event which brought into vogue, under another name, the colour called the *yellow-leaf*, which until then, had been held in excessive contempt. The Archduke Albert besieged Ostend in 1601; the Infanta Isabella, his wife, daughter of Philip II. made a vow, which would not, probably, have come into the head of a Frenchwoman; it was, that she would not change *any* of the vestments which she then wore, until the place was taken, the siege lasted three years and seventy-eight days. Such a lapse of time must have occasioned a singular alteration in the whiteness of the linen worn immediately next the skin; and the archduchess never quitted it, conformably to her vow, until the day that she entered the city. Her courtiers equally officious, and equally ingenious, perhaps, with those of the grand Lama, adopted and brought into vogue,

under the name of Isabella, a colour which recalled, as often as it met their eye, a most agreeable image.

The use of bracelets, of necklaces, and of ear-rings (the only ornament common to all females of every age and of every nation) was universally adopted during the reign of Charles VII. Agnes Sorel was the first in France, who employed Diamonds for this purpose.

Isabeau of Bavaria, who had extremely handsome shoulders, had at the same time, too much volatility to conform herself to the *guimpe*, or nun's handkerchief, which was worn in the French court, at the time she arrived there. It is to this beautiful and vicious queen, that we might ascribe the honor of those robes, open on the back, which the present age has improved to such an extent, as to justify Isabeau from that reproach of indecency which her contemporaries lavished upon her.

Henry II., from a contrary motive, in order to conceal a scar which he had re-

ceived on his neck, the origin of which, he apprehended, might expose him to contempt; or rather, in order to escape contempt altogether, invented the ruff; and the women, always in extremes, adopted, but with excessive exaggeration, the mode which the prince had introduced. Catherine de Medicis made it her principal ornament, and some years after, a queen of the same house, Mary de Medicis, without diminishing the amplitude of the ruff, gave it a direction more favourable to a display of the neck; she bequeathed her name to this article of dress, which was revived with extraordinary eclat, by the French ladies at the commencement of the nineteenth century. This ornament, common to both sexes at the time of the Medicis, was adopted by all Europe. John Stowe, an English author and tailor, has left some invaluable memorials respecting the fashions of his country, he says, "*At this epoch, the reputation of a young cavalier consisted*

in the size of his ruff, and the length of his rapier."

The reign of Henry III. was that of perfumers; this effeminate prince who passed every day, four hours at his toilette, and who slept in prepared gloves, in order to give delicacy to his hands, found it easy to disseminate his own taste for cosmeticks among the women, and that multitude of *young voluptuaries who reigned in his name.* The Italian perfumers were at that time the most celebrated; numbers came to settle at Paris; and this art, so highly esteemed and contributing so much to the enjoyments of the orientalists, was there carried to a perfection, which, notwithstanding all their efforts, the *Teissiers,* the *Fargeons,* and the *Ribans,* have not been able to attain.

One of the most ridiculous adjuncts of the female toilette in former times, the *vertugadin,* originated during the sixteenth century: it was ridiculously imagined to

give elegance to the shape by rounding the hips, and the women, in compliment to their modesty, called it *virtue garden*, corrupted into *vertugadin*. This embellishment, abandoned for more than an age, reappeared in full splendour, under the name of the *Panier;* this was the name of a solicitor who died at that epoch, and some *élégantes* took this method of immortalizing his name by an absurdity. This panier enveloped all the women in Europe. Addison dilates on the subject with no less wit than severity: he compares the monstrous superfluity, *to those sacred enclosures of the African nations, in the centre of which, we discover, enclosed by seven or eight circumvallations, the god, who, after all, is nothing but a diminutive ape.*

This pleasantry has so much spirit in the original text that I will transcribe it.

" When I survey this new-fashioned rotunda, (the panniers in question) *I cannot but think of the old philosopher, who, after having entered into an Egyptian temple,*

and looked about for the idol of the place, at length discovered a little black monkey, inshrined in the midst of it, upon which he could not forbear crying out: what a magnificent palace is here for such a ridiculous inhabitant."

I shall now speak of recent and existing fashions, with some details, in their relationship to taste, manners, and local affinities.

After having thrown a rapid coup-d'œil over the principal revolutions of France, since the foundation of the monarchy to the present times, I arrest my course for a moment at the eighteenth century; of which I have seen the larger half, and to the follies of which, I recollect with some compunction, I did all in my power to contribute.

During the latter years of Louis XIVth., the court subjected to the immutable ordinations of etiquette, conformed itself to the manners of the prince, and the gaiety of fashion, was supplanted by a disgusting formality. The old noblemen felt no inclination to revive a costume contemporary with their

youth and their glory; the young ones were fearful of hazarding the slightest change, under the eyes of a suspicious monarch, who considered every species of innovation as an insult to his authority, or at least, as an indirect satire on those customs which he himself had originally established. Thus, on one side, the fear inspired by the king; on the other, the excessive prudery affected by Madame Maintenon, subjected for some time, both the court and the city to a sullen uniformity, the most intolerable yoke which could possibly have been imposed on the French nation. On the death of Lewis XIV. the proteus of fashion burst his fetters, and established himself at the court of the regent. The Duke of Orleans retained in his mature age, the propensities of his youth, and himself gave the signal of that sudden revolution, which was immediately effected in costume and in manners. The young gentry immediately exchanged their large doublets, and long skirts, for the Polish cloak and the Turkish vest; they passed from the church to the

tavern, from the sermons to the operas, and honoured themselves with the appellation of *roues*, to which we can ascribe no other meaning than that of the punishment which their debaucheries frequently merited.* The *bon ton*, at that time, was to pass the day in a tavern, and to present themselves at the "Œil-de-Bœuf," flushed with wine, and their noses covered with snuff. The toilette grew almost obsolete amidst this systematic derangement; stockings drawn on athwart the leg, ruffled lace, and a disordered head-dress, formed for a red-heeled *petit-maitre*, the last degree of elegance and polished manners.

This revolution in *system*, contributed more than any thing else to that inundation of false taste, which overwhelmed both fashion and the arts during the reign of Louis XV. The scandalous fortunes amassed by

* The punishment of the *Wheel*; but *Roue*, in the Dictionary of the Academy is explained to be the familiar appellation for a person devoid of principle.

financiers, gave birth to the most enormous absurdities: these upstart gentry, having risen for the most part, from the dregs of society, imagined themselves imitating the manners of the court, while they adopted its vices, and exaggerated its luxuries. Under a habit, bedizened with gold lace and embroidery, heaped on, without taste, and without selection, the farmer-general felt himself an important personage, but he was still only a *Turcaret*. In order to conceal, as much as possible, those traits, of which nobility was not the distinctive character, they invented the perruque, *à la financière;* by which the head was, in some degree enveloped in a triple row of buckles, knots, and curls.

That practice, the most absurd and unaccountable of which we have any record, the practice of wearing powder began at this epoch. The young Duke of Fronsac, (afterwards Marshal Richelieu) was the first who adopted it. Dress, at the same time, began to lose something of its amplitude, cuffs gave way to laced ruffles, the

frill were substituted for the band, and stockings rolled over the knee, remained in the world, as on the stage, the exclusive appurtenance of extreme old age.

Suppers formed, at that time, the fashionable repast; those of the Regent, at the Palais-Royal, were distinguished for spirit and gaiety, yet were regulated by a species of etiquette, which excluded that liberty, or in other words, license, which this prince, sufficiently amiable in other respects, associated with his pleasures. In order to disengage himself from the vestige of restraint, he substituted for the grand suppers of the Palais-Royal, the little suppers of the Luxembourg, where his daughter, the Duchess of Berry did the honours a little too gaily. This retreat at the Luxembourg, of which we will not stop to consider all the conveniencies, gave, I believe, the first idea of *Petites Maisons*, of those pretended and mysterious asylums, where pleasure, it was imagined, had been secured by the expulsion of ceremony;

where domestics had been excluded in prudential precaution; and in fine, where the fugitive sought concealment, like the Galatea of Virgil, in order to be seen more effectually. Whatever was the origin and purpose of these Petites maisons, they gave birth to an evening *demi-negligè*, of which the male head-dress, was analagously, a hat *à la Jaquet*, and that of the women, (in derision, no doubt) the cap of *Minerva*.

The painter, Boucher had too much influence on the fashions of his day, to allow us to forget him in a history of their revolutions. His pictures, the extraordinary popularity of which, may give some idea of the state of degradation into which the arts had fallen in France, were, during more than fifteen years (from 1724 to 1740) the sole authorities of fashion. This affected painter, who was most ridiculously called the painter of *the Graces*, became the oracle of all the pretty women of this epoch, each of whom endeavoured to model her appearance by some figure in his pictures.

They imitated the capricious draperies, of purple, pink, and grey stuffs, in which Boucher dressed up those puppets, which he denominated shepherdesses. This was the time for pompoons, furbelows and for trinkets of all kinds, with which female costume is incumbered.

In order to form a just idea of the bad taste of those times, it is only necessary to give a glance at the *general collection of head-dresses, and the assemblage of French fashions*, formerly at Desnos'; and even now consulted with avidity by the curious.

The rage for knick-knacks extended itself through all the empire of luxury; the women were all enraptured with Chinese monsters, japan vases, lackered toilets, tapestries in camaieu, cut parterres, and lap-dogs. Boucher, whom the king had nominated his first painter, by way of recompensing him, no doubt, for having painted his portrait as Hercules, with an eagle on his head; might boast of having

given the tone to his age, and to have corrupted the arts in all their departments. His style, unfortunately is not the only memorial which he has left of his influence.

The use of powder introduced innumerable alterations in the head-dresses, both of men and women. Towards the end of the reign of Louis XV., the men, familiar at court, wore their hair buckled and tied behind with a simple ribband, which allowed it to float over their shoulders. Some elegantès accustomed themselves to tie it up during the morning, in a purse of black taffeta, to which they gave the name of the *bag*, and this, at last, formed part of a full-dress. The bag varied its form and colour; sometimes it exhibited itself at the Tuileries, in a sky-blue or rose colour: the bourgeois restricted themselves to the *crapeau*, a little round purse, which confined the hair close to the head. While the men displayed in their head-dresses, the various inventions of the *horse-shoe, (coiffures en fer à cheval) the pigeon's wings,*

the hundred curls, and the cavalier's wig; the women exceeded them in an absurdity, the privilege of which they preserved to themselves. The famous Leonard has immortalized it—

En portant jusque'au ciel l'audace des coiffures.

Rais'd the audacious head-dress to the sky.

At this time, (in 1775) women were obliged to remove the cushions from the seats of carriages, in order to find room; and they took especial care to enter head-foremost, lest any accident should happen to the *coiffure;* several pleasant caricatures appeared on the subject, in one of which, we see a gallant, who knocks out the top of a coach gateway, for the purpose of introducing into his hotel, a lady whom he had under his arm.

In another, a set of fire-men are playing their engines in order to extinguish a conflagration, which has burst out in one of those gigantic head-dresses.

Here the *coiffure* mounted on a double ladder, had the appearance of a hedge-row of elm trees.

There, that of a young sportsman, exploring the summit of the head-dress, in search of the birds inhabiting it, as in a lofty forest.

Leonard held the title of hair-dresser to the court: it was established that no lady should be *presented* unless *he* had dressed her hair, and had received from her a douceour of ten guineas, mysteriously presented: this was the price which he expected for the *stroke of his comb.*

A geometrician calculated, that a lady's face occupied exactly the centre point, betwixt her feet, and the summit of that edifice of hair, which surmounted her head. This curious scaffolding gave way all at once, and little bonnets, whose nomenclature alone would fill a volume, succeeded with the rapidity of that caprice which gave them birth, and which determined their duration. Every new event exploded the

preceding fashion. The romance of Paul and Virginia, brought into vogue the Creole head-dress, and the success of *la Folle par Amour*, gave birth to the hat, *a la Nina*.

The revolution commenced, and fashion enjoyed a kind of *Saturnalia*: we met in the same saloon, the *bourgeois* in an embroidered habit, the marquis in a frock, the petit-maitre, *en chenille* (caterpillar), the Anglican in boots; women *en levite, en pierrot, en caraco,* and in long-tailed robes. Terror, in a red bonnet, soon simplified the costume; and the *carmagnole* was admitted as a habit of luxury, among a nation of *sans culottes*.

The first moments of tranquillity, re-illumined the torch of pleasure, and gaiety was the only impulse. The balls of the hotel *de Richelieu*, the concerts of *Feydeau*, the fetes of Garchi, and of the pavillion d'Hanovre, witnessed the resuscitation of our élégantes in the Greek costume, and the young men assumed the head-dress of

the Roman emperors. At length, after the costumes of all nations, ancient and modern, had passed before us, during the space of a few years, our women appear to have selected whatever is most agreeable from each, for the formation of their own. I except, however, the Chinese head-dress, the immeasurable height of which, deprives the head of all proportion and grace; and imposes a penance on every man who has the misfortune to be placed at a spectacle, behind one of those *demi-elegantes*, who have lately adopted this miserable caricature.

The reigning fashions, although partially imitated, as I have said, from originals too remote, leave us little to wish, since they have been adopted with reference to our habitual feelings, our manners, and our climate. Perhaps one would wish a little more of the ideal. A refined morality is estimated, in our modern imaginations, before every thing, and we exact, from whatever lays claim to the homage of our

admiration, the charm of delicacy and mystery. When a female betrays, in every step she takes in the street, the beauties of her person, does she not, in part, divest herself of her influence? A long civilization renders us difficult to please: every charm which a woman reveals, every veil she discards, may be considered as an attraction sacrificed. I speak here in the interest of love, which can never be separated from that of modesty.

The greatest inconvenience in the reigning fashions, is the expense they occasion. Luxury, though perhaps essential to the state, ought not be considered an obligation of custom. It is injudicious to make the Cachemire shawl an indispensable appendage for every woman, or the lace veil for all young wives: I do not like to see at a spectacle, the wife of a merchant, glittering in as superb a set of diamonds as the marchioness in the adjacent box, to whom, she probably sold a dress during the morning.

Women, it cannot be denied, pay more attention to their intellect, at present, than formerly: how is it then that their expences are increased in so alarming a proportion? Here, a woman who, herself, nurses all her children, ruins them by her luxury: and the bills of *Le Roi* produce, at least as much trouble in affairs of house-keeping, as love-letters could do. If women only adorned themselves, as heretofore, for the purpose of pleasing the men, I would take on myself to convince them, I, who am in the secret of these things, that so much expense is useless; that men take no account but of such ornaments as are becoming, that they understand what pleases, and not what it is necessary to admire; that a little grace, wit, and amiability, which cost nothing, charm them infinitely beyond jewels and embroidery, which occasion ruin. But what purpose does all my discourse answer? Women, at present, dress for—women; the toilette is nothing more than the instrument of a cold ambition which

they exercise on each other, and as these ladies are, in general, sufficiently difficult to convince on the subject of their respective attractions, they have resorted to an infallible criterion for establishing their superiority—the price of a shawl or a diamond.

The male habit in France, is, what it has constantly been since the reign of Henry III. inclusively, (whatever change it may have undergone) scanty, incommodious, and ungraceful: it has besides, in my eyes, the inconvenience of confounding all ranks and all professions; this perhaps may be a prejudice peculiar to my age, but I cannot see what utility can result from the pretensions of persons to a distinction to which they have no right; it appears to me, too, that an equality of costume tends to create an ambition in many to rise above their condition, since a similarity of habit contributes to preserve that *esprit de corps*, so necessary in all professions. The magistrate, in long locks had more gravity; the physician, in a black robe, and a large

wig, would not have dared to jest at the pillow of a dying man; the sword worn by the courtier, enforced on him a law of politeness; and the venerable habit peculiar to the ecclesiastic exacted from him the greatest circumspection in his conduct and conversation. If an epoch be objected to me, in which it was different, it was at a time when society was tending towards its destruction, and I find in it the proof, not the refutation of an opinion, which I maintain after Duclos and St. Fois.

It would be worthy of the age in which we live, to create a national costume, which should re-establish those gradations, and which, more favourable to the exterior of men, should associate for women, the forms most favorable to beauty, such as would impress respect, and preserve to them the prepossessions of imagination.

No. V.—10th Nov. 1813.

AN EXECUTION AT THE PLACE DE GREVE.

D'un spectacle cruel indignement avide,
Turbulent, curieux avec compassion,
Tout un peuple s'agite autour de la prison:
Etrange empressement de voir des misérables!
On hâte, en gemissant, ces momens formidables.

VOLT. TANCREDE, Act. 3. Sec. 3.

With barbarous haste, with tumult fierce and loud,
Round the dire scaffold throng the curious crowd;
They pant for blood, and urge with furious breath
The destin'd hour to feast their eyes with death.

I HAD occasion to remark, in my last essay, that particular contrast in the French

character, constituted by a love of novelty, and an attachment to custom. This strange contradiction, though equally strong, is perhaps less offensive, at the first glance, than that of excessive politeness, and of ferocious curiosity, for which the people, and principally those of this capital, have at all times been distinguished. In fact, what different ideas must suggest themselves to two strangers, one of whom had only seen the Parisians at the opera; the other, only in traversing the city along the quays, on the day of an execution at the *Place de Grève?* What must the last imagine, on finding his carriage arrested, at every instant, in the midst of an immense crowd pressing round the *Hotel de Ville* and the *Palais de Justice;* in hearing the confused and tumultuous shouts of the populace, which are raised pretty nearly in the same degree, whatever be the circumstance which occasions them?

This stranger, who sees on the road the artisan quit his shop, the *bourgeois* forget

his dinner-hour; women stationed at the windows; others mingled in the crowd, with which the quays and the bridges are covered; the taverns and public houses filled with guests; must not this stranger, I say, imagine himself arrived at Paris on the day of a grand solemnity? Suppose also, that he questions his postillion, and is informed that this concourse of people that all this eagerness is for the purpose of enjoying the last agonies of an unhappy wretch, condemned to execution; would not the traveller, in order to reconcile the traces of civilization he had observed, with such barbarous habits—would he not be justified in believing himself in the midst of a horde of savages, recently established in the capital of a civilized nation? Curious to observe a little nearer this multitude of the borders of the Seine, he descends, mingles among the crowd, and addressing himself to one of the inhabitants of *la Grève*, he inquires what was the use of those piles of wood-work which are now

being pulled down, and which appear to have belonged to some grand construction; the person replies, that these vestiges formed part of a vast wooden edifice, which had been erected a fortnight since, for the purpose of public rejoicing.—And this other building, of smaller extent, which they prepare on the same spot? That is a scaffold, where we shall see, precisely at four o'clock, a well-known individual, who has been tried and convicted of assassination. I imagine that at this response, the stranger must say to himself; "What! the inhabitants of this good city erect then, in the same place, ball-rooms and scaffolds! they mingle, in idea at least, the sounds of a violin and the cries of a malefactor! they appoint, at the same time, and in the same place, fêtes and executions! I have deceived myself, these persons are not savages; they are fools." I have often made this reflection, which I here ascribe to my traveller; and I never pass the place *de Grève*, without trembling

at this terrifying contrast, the image of which is always before my eyes.

This place, the name of which revives the most odious recollections, was, at the commencement of the 14th age, appropriated to the execution of criminals. It is painful to learn that innocent blood was the first which flowed here. An unhappy female heretic, named Margaret Porette, scarcely thirty years old, was burnt here in 1310, for having written, *that the soul, absorbed in God, is at the height of every virtue, and has nothing more to do: and that when a certain degree of virtue is attained, one cannot go beyond it.* Four hundred years afterwards, another female was allowed to utter, with impunity, nearly the same absurdities. Four ages hence, and perhaps we shall run the risk of being burnt, for denying the evidence of the same propositions; so unerring is human reason! so infallible is human justice!— Previously to this execution, criminals were

put to death in the market-places, which still participated, during more than an age, with *la Grève*, the miserable prerogative of scaffolds. In this last place, were decapitated, in 1398, the two Augustin monks, who had engaged, for a large remuneration, and on the penalty of their lives, to cure Charles VI. of an incurable malady, with which he was struck. The two friars lost their heads, and the king did not recover his own. The last execution, which took place in a market-place, in 1477, was that of the unhappy Duke of Nemours, whose children, placed on the scaffold, by order of the cruel Louis XI., were covered with the blood of their father. This unfortunate man was conducted from the Bastile to the place of his execution, on a horse, caparisoned with black. Since that epoch, every sentence of death, passed at Paris, has been executed at the Place de Grève.

In coming, some days since, out of the Hotel de Ville, I stopt for some moments on the steps; when I found myself assailed,

all at once, by a multitude of ideas and of painful recollections. I imagined that I had under my eyes, the scaffold where a brave general perished so miserably, surrounded by the *beau-monde*, who came *to have the pleasure of seeing his head fall*; that enormous gibbet where the unfortunate *Favras* was one of the first to pay his life for his unalterable fidelity. I contemplated, with shuddering, this Hotel de Ville, the witness of so many crimes and so many executions. I ran over, in idea, the sanguinary records of *la Grève*, where I read with horror the names of Ravailhac, of Brinvilliers, of Damien, of Cartouche, and all the frightful succession of human atrocities. Every kind of crime—robbery, assassination, poisoning, parricide, sacrilege, finds there its ignominious illustration; and according to the remark of the judicious author of "Essays on Paris," all the monsters who have figured at this place, would form an assemblage more numerous than any one of those which have been collected at their execution.

These melancholy ideas, on which my mind engaged itself involuntarily during the rest of the day, continued to occupy me in the evening, when I met Dr. M., one of those men, who, as Sterne says, "seek the north-east passage of the intellectual world, to expedite their arrival at the land of science." This learned physician, the great enemy of systems, and of speculative theories, has occupied himself, during six years, on a work "on the Affinities of Physiology and Morals," in the execution of which, he spends great part of his time in prisons, in order to collect his facts, to multiply his authorities, and to extend his experience. The interest of the science, and the constant preoccupation of a single idea, protects him from any painful feeling, and even from the ridicule sometimes excited by the diligence he uses to be present at the apprehension of great criminals, to follow them before the tribunals, into the prisons, and even to the foot of the scaffold, at the risk of being confounded with those unfeeling idlers, who seek, indif-

ferently, a spectacle at la Grève or at Tivoli. Persons who are accustomed to confound the words and ideas of sensation and of sentiment, who take no account of the strength of will and the force of habit, would find it difficult to believe the sensibility of a man, who makes it his task to watch, in the heart of a condemned criminal, the last sighs of hope, and to observe human nature at war with the idea of destruction. The Doctor explains extremely well, and proves still better by his practice, that the operations of the mind and the movements of the soul are not on the same principle, and ought not to be judged of by the same results. Mr. M. concluded, while yet arguing, by making me promise to attend him the next day to the Conciergerie, to see the assassin Laumond, previous to the hour of his being brought forth for his execution.

The Doctor was exact; but at the moment of setting out, I felt a compunction at heart, which would have made me renounce

my project, if I had not been ashamed of exposing all my weakness to a man who would not have done honour to my sensibility. We departed. On the road, he recounted to me the frightful details of the murder committed on the fruiterer of Verneuil Street. "The unhappy being whom we are going to see," said he, in finishing his narration, "is a new proof, in support of a truth which I shall exemplify by his whole career: it is, that the door of a gaming-house is one of the gates to the gibbet. During fifteen years that I have studied, that I have been making observations on great criminals, I have scarcely seen any who have not been seized, either with the dice or the cards in their hands." Without giving me time to object to what I might consider exaggerated in this assertion, he applied the principle to the whole life of this Laumond, whom he described, even in his childhood, abandoned to that love of gaming which he retained during his whole career, in public places among chil-

dren of his own age, who played the prelude to the same vices, in yielding to the same inclinations.—"In turn, a bad son, a bad husband, a bad father, I should have concluded," continued the Doctor, "from the details only of his private life, that the head of such a man must be consigned to the executioner, before the age of thirty. One thing only surprises me," added he, "it is, that a wretch whose crime evinced so much weakness, should have had the courage to dispense with the privilege of pleading *not guilty*, to dispute with justice those hours of agony, and which the law grants the criminal; we scarcely meet with one victim in a thousand who has the resolution to refuse this cruel benefit."

We arrived at the prison, and we had great difficulty in traversing the court, where twenty thousand persons waited, with impatience, the moment of execution. The entrance of the Conciergerie has nothing repulsive except in the idea attached to it.

After having passed under the fatal arch-way, guarded by a piquet of soldiers, appointed as an escort to the criminal, we presented ourselves at the wicket, which opened at the voice of the Doctor. The silence of death reigned, already, within those vaults, elevated on the site of the ancient palace of our kings: the frightful dungeons, by which we were surrounded, formed, heretofore, part of the apartments which Saint Louis inhabited. This court, which the criminal paces, revolving his past crimes, or where, perhaps, some innocent sheds his tears in secret, is the same inclosure where King Charles V. assembled his council; where the princes of the blood, and the nobility of the kingdom met to discuss the interests of the people, and the necessities of the state. We were between the two wickets, in the parlour of the Wardour's Office, whither the criminal was about to be brought. Exactly at half-past three, when the Serjeant of the Imperial Court arrived, in order to conduct him to

the place of execution, the door of a long obscure corridor opened with a great noise, and the assassin, Laumond, appeared between the executioners; not having on the earth, from which he was about to disappear, any other creature who interested himself in his fate, except the virtuous ecclesiastic, whose holy office is to administer consolation to despair, and present hope to repentance. There are emotions, of which, we cannot give an idea, even after having felt them: such are those produced by the sight of a being who breathes, who thinks, who moves, who is in full possession of his faculties, physical and moral; and who in a few minutes, will present only the image of death,—will be nothing more than a corpse. I wish in vain, for the power of expressing that which passed within me at the sight of this unfortunate, whose hair fell beneath the fatal scissars, and whom the executioners stripped, after having tied his hands. In contemplating him, standing on a stool, his eyes hag-

gard, his head reclined on his breast, every muscle of his body in convulsive agitation, the assassin disappeared; I no longer saw any thing but a man, and sentiments of horror gave way to those of pity. The bell tolled four.—At this signal of death, the gratings flew open: he again saw the sky; he found himself, once more, in the midst of men, from the number of whom he was already proscribed. He mounted into the car of infamy, amidst the noise of imprecations, with which his appearance inspired the multitude, and which accompanied him even to the scaffold, erected in the Place *de Grève*, which he had more than once traversed, in meditating, perhaps, the crime for which he was about to receive punishment.

After the criminal's departure, the doctor conducted me to the keeper's apartments, where we found, in a saloon agreeably decorated, a young person who was taking a lesson in music, and who sung in a sweet voice, accompanying it with the

piano, the ballad of "*The beautiful Country of Spain.*" This near approach of objects so contrasted, of a vile assassin and a young girl, full of grace and innocence; of a gloomy dungeon, and a musical saloon; of the noise of chains, and a song of love; furnished me with a source of reflections which I need only hint, to suggest a similar train to the imaginations of my readers.

No. VI.—25th Sept. 1813.

THE RACES OF THE CHAMP DE MARS.

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.

Virgil.

De leurs pas bruyans battant les champs poudreux,
D'un tourbillon de sable obscurcissent les cieux.

Delille, Eneide 8.

Beating the ground, their burning feet gives rise
To clouds of dust which darken all the skies.

Fas est et ab hoste doceri.

Horace.

It is sometimes useful to receive lessons from an enemy.

One of the most remarkable chapters of the immortal work of M. de Buffon, is that

on the *horse*. This the eloquent writer describes as *the most brilliant conquest which man has made over nature;* and nobody, after reading his admirable description of the manners of that noble creature, can be astonished at the rank assigned to him by his historian. "In all ages and in every nation of the world," says an English author*, "horses have enjoyed a very high con-

* Adam Fitz-Adam, author of a periodical work called "The World." *Author.*—Mr. Jouy seems not to be aware that Adam Fitz-Adam was the assumed name of Mr. Moore, the editor of this periodical publication, the contributors to which were very numerous; comprehending, in addition to Mr. Moore, H. Walpole, Mr. W. Whitehead, Mr. Coventrye, Mr. J. Wharton, Mr. J. Tilson, Mr. Dodsley, Mr. Duncombe, Sir C. H. Williams, Mr. Parratt, Mr. Roberts, the Earl of Corke, Mr. Cambridge, the Hon. Mr. Boyle, Mr. Cole, Mr. R. Berenger, Mr. Loveybond, Mr. Garrick, Mr. J. G. Cooper, jun. Mr. Marriott, Mr. Herring, Mr. Soame Jenyns, Mr. Mulso, Sir D. Dalrymple, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Moyle, Mr. Gataker, Mr. Burgess, and several anonymous correspondents.—*Translator.*

sideration. Every body knows that Darius was indebted for the throne of Persia to the neighing of his horse, which, by-the-bye, has made some of those who rail at the facts and exploits of antiquity say, that it might have been as well to suffer the false Smerdis to reign, as to supersede him in this manner. Bucephalus shared with Alexander the glory of his conquests. It is a well established fact, that a Roman Emperor wished his horse to be named Consul; and it has been generally admitted, that that dignity would have become the animal quite as well as the diadem did his master." But without going back so far, and seeking so high for the titles of this beautiful quadruped, let us examine him in that exercise in which he displays to the greatest advantage the valuable qualities of which he is possessed.

The English are unquestionably, of all modern people, those who have given their attention to the care of horses with most success. If it is doubtful whether they have yet brought this race of animals to

perfection, it is certain that they have singularly improved that breed, which they designate (principally on account of its swiftness) the *race horse*. Two great means have conducted them to this result: the scrupulous attention with which they apply themselves to establish in the most authentic manner the origin of the race horse; and the institution of the annual meetings at Newmarket, &c. The English have borrowed from the Arabs the use of genealogies of horses; to establish which, they require evidence better supported, and proofs more numerous than they formerly demanded at the installation of a canon of Lyons, or a knight of Malta.

The taste or rather the passion for horses, which was extinguished in France with the use of tournaments, revived towards the middle of the last century, and it is from that epoch that they date the first experiment of races, in imitation of those adopted in England. This attempt was made in consequence of a wager laid at

Fontainbleau (during a journey of the Court) by an English gentleman whose name I cannot at this moment recollect. He had betted a thousand Louis, that in two hours he would perform the journey from Fontainbleau to the *barrière des Gobelins*, and he won by some minutes. In the year following, a great French lord, on his return from England, (where Louis XV. represented him to have been to learn to take care of horses) succeeded in procuring an exhibition of races in the plain des Sablons. He endeavoured to provide for their periodical return, but this project was not carried into effect till many years afterwards, when the races of the wood of Vincennes were established, which had no object of public utility or national glory in view, since all the horses which ran were brought from England.

In instituting annual races, where none are admitted but native horses, and where a prize is given to the winners to indemnify them for their trouble and expences, the

government hoped to excite a spirit of emulation in the proprietors, to bring to perfection the excellent species of French horses. The progress made in a short time renders it impossible to doubt, that the end proposed will be soon attained, and that we shall equal, if not surpass, our neighbours.

Every civilized nation has a degree of superiority over others, which in some respect distinguishes it; and among many advantages of which the English gratuitously boast, they may establish a just title to one, in the excellence of their stud. This concession I lately made to M. de Marieux, an old *Anglomaniac* of my acquaintance, who is never weary of speaking of the excellence of their grooms, of the cleanliness, convenience, and even the elegance of their stables, and especially of all the minute attention which is bestowed upon the breeding of the horse in England. I happened to hear a long account, connected with this subject, of a three-months'

journey which my friend made on the other side of the channel, in the course of which "he bought an old Devonshire stallion, which he has just succeeded in smuggling over, and out of which, eight or ten years ago, he might have got some fine colts. He has attended the races at Newmarket, where he betted ten guineas with the Lord Mayor's butler; he has visited the stud of Mr. Brindley; rode a horse belonging to the Prince of Wales, and made an acquaintance with the Duke of York's stable-keeper." It may easily be conceived, that a person with such connexions and such prepossessions, had some difficulty in persuading himself to accompany me on Sunday to the races of the *Champ de Mars*. "What can one see here in amusements of this description," said he, "after being in England?" The weather was beautifully fine; he thought he might as well walk there as any where else, and therefore suffered himself to be prevailed upon, and we set off from the

coffee-house, where we had breakfasted together, to go to the *Champ de Mars*, in the midst of an immense crowd, journeying the same way. We for the first time crossed the river over the bridge of Jena, that chef-d'œuvre of art, which the good Parisians enjoy with indifference,

"Et comme accutumés à de pareils présens."

"As if accustom'd to such glorious gifts."

I think it is impossible for imagination to form a more magnificent and animated picture than that furnished by the splendid esplanade of the Military School, at the moment when the people, in immense numbers, crowded towards it on all sides, to take their places on the terrace, which bounds the enclosed circle. Some one near me (he was misinformed I hope) said it was in contemplation to level the earth, and to destroy this vast amphitheatre, which was raised in eight days by the labour of the entire population of Paris, for the memorable Federation of 1790. We have so often had occa-

sion to appreciate the advantages of a place so admirably fitted for national fêtes, that it does not seem to me at all probable that this levelling project will be adopted.

While the crowd arranged themselves on the ground, the calashes, curricles, buggies, and vehicles of all descriptions, were placed in order along the avenues at the extremity of the *Champ de Mars*. The space specially reserved for the race was marked by posts fastened with ropes in the form of a gate. The centre was occupied by spectators on horseback; two tents were open to persons who had cards of invitation; a third more elegantly, decorated, was prepared for his Excellency the Minister of the Interior, the judges of the course, the inspectors of the stud, and the jury of admission. My friend Mairieux, quite astonished at the beauty of the *coup d'œil*, confessed to me, shaking his head, that Newmarket was far from offering to the eye so imposing a spectacle. Forced to admire the general aspect of the scene, he indem-

nified himself by censuring the details of it, and he spared at most not more than five or six of the horsemen among those who travelled over the circle; and who successively became the objects of his criticism. "One was mounted on a short-tailed horse, caparisoned like that of an hussar; another trotted in the English way on a flat saddle, with a fly driver, a velvet chabraque of a crimson colour, and a bow upon his horse's tail. This one curvetted on an English saddle, with ornaments on the bridle, the crupper, and the martingale; that galloped a *contre pied* with impenetrable assurance." All these perversions of costume amused my companion much, who ridiculed equally the riders and their horses. These were not well formed; those had a bad gait; the others were of no breed. It was easy to perceive from the trot of some, that the modest animals had just quitted the pole of a hackney coach or the shaft of a *demi-fortune* (a one-horse carriage), to

figure on the course as riding-horses, and it could be seen that others, in attempting to gallop, vainly endeavoured to bring back the recollection of their youth."

It was four o'clock—the moment at which the race was to commence approached; the horses had been examined by the inspectors, and admitted to be French. The jockies, with their saddles under their arms, dressed in their caps and satin jackets, after having been weighed according to custom, finished saddling their horses, and inspected every part of the harness. At length the signal for starting was given, and we hastened to take our stand on a hill, about a hundred toises from the winning-post, in the midst of a worthy family which had been assembled there ever since the morning. The chief member of the house lost no time in letting me know that he had been for the last thirty years a seller of lemonade on the Boulevart Beaumarchais. The hobby of this good man, who had pro-

bably in the course of his life, seen few horses but those of the brewer, who brought him once a week his cask of beer; his hobby I say, was to speak of racing against time in technical language, of which he knew not the meaning, with an assurance extremely ludicrous, to every one but Mairieux, who was only occupied in furnishing him with the proper words. It is probable that the lemonade merchant would have finished like *Larissole* by sending his instructor packing, but happily a general cry announced the commencement of the race.

Two beautiful horses mounted by jockies, who were dressed the one in blue, the other in yellow, ran the first heat with a rapidity at which my companion himself was surprised. The second was not so soon performed, which caused him to pronounce that our jockies did not know their trade, and that those of England were very careful to husband the strength of their

horses for the last moment, when they approached the goal. However this may be, the yellow jockey finished his career in four minutes and forty-eight seconds; got in twelve seconds before his rival, and was proclaimed the winner of the first race.

In the next contest between two mares, the blue jockey had the good fortune to get in twelve seconds before the other.

The third race, in which many horses were to run, particularly attracted my attention. I surveyed with extreme pleasure some of the most beautiful animals of the creation, displaying all the suppleness of their muscles, and all the vigour of their nerves, to establish their superiority, of which they seemed to appreciate the advantage. I observed the address and the skill of those who mounted them, and who so largely participated in their success; but whatever attention I gave to the spectacle before my eyes, I was very far from taking as much interest in it as the daughter of

the lemonade seller, near whom I found myself, and whose anxiety and pretty face, had before attracted my notice. This young woman, her eyes fixed on the arena, could not help exclaiming in a tremulous voice,—"there he is, father—there he is—" as she saw a young man in an orange-coloured jacket, mounted on a mare whose ardour promised well, pass by like lightning. "Ah! yes it is Francis," said the father, with an air of indifference; "it is friend Francis," repeated the mother in a lower tone, taking the hand of her daughter, and the little shawl over the bosom of Mademoiselle Louisa was I perceived much agitated; a blush covered her cheeks, and her eyes were suffused with tears. At the end of the first heat, Francis was left several toises behind by one of his rivals. My pretty neighbour respired with difficulty: her father declared, with a loud laugh, which he meant to be satirical, that "Francis would not win the race."

Madame Herbert, his wife, said that "they should see," and my friend with a loud voice offered "to bet two to one on the jockey in the orange jacket." This speech was requited with a look of which Francis might have been jealous. Mairieux was right; in the middle of the second heat, the young man had recovered his lost ground, and collecting for a last effort all the strength of his mare, which he had skilfully managed, he darted, if I may be allowed the word, to the goal, which he reached three seconds before the rival by whom he was most closely pressed. I leave the reader to judge with what pleasure Mademoiselle Louisa heard the name of the victor proclaimed.

I did not quit the Herbert family till I had learnt the nature of the interest which they took in the success of Francis, nor without complimenting his daughter on a triumph, of which they confessed she was to be the prize.

On leaving these good folks, we dined at the house of a Restarateur of Gros Caillou, where I made some notes, and collected some observations which may find a place in a future paper

No. VII.—3d Octr. 1813.

A DINNER OF ARTISTS.

Qu'il est grand, qu'il est doux de se dire à soi-meme:
Je n'ai point d'ennemis, j'ai des rivaux que j'aime;
Je prends part à leur gloire, a leurs maux, a leurs biens:
Les arts nous ont unis, leur beaux jours sont les miens.
C'est ainsi que la terre avec plaisir rassemble,
Ces chênes, ces sapins, qui s'élèvent ensemble;
Un suc, toujours égal, est préparé pour eux:
Leur pied touche aux enfers, leur cime est dans les cieux;
Leur tronc inébranlable et leur pompeuse tête
Résiste, en se touchant, aux coups de la tempête:
Ils vivent l'un par l'autre, ils triomphent du tems,
Tandis que, sous leur ombre, on voit de vils serpens
Se livrer, en sifflant, des guerres intestines
Et de leur sang impur arroser leurs racines.

Volt. Disc. en vers.

Jealousy in the arts, is the vice of mediocrity. This has been said, I believe,

and experience proves it to be true, with some few exceptions, which rather confirm, than militate against the general rule. The four greatest poets in the age of Louis XIV., Moliere, Boileau, Racine and La Fontaine, lived long together in the strictest intimacy, and always met once a week with Lully, Mignard, and Dufresnoy. Chapelle, one of the Corypheuses of the modern sect of Epicureans, the brothers Brossins, so well known for their devotion to good-living, Counsellor Brilhac and many other distinguished persons, at the same epoch established a weekly dinner party at the *Pomme-de-Pin* (Pine Apple) of which we may form some idea, by reflecting that "*les Plaideurs*" and "*le Chapelain decoiffée*,"* were chiefly composed at these jovial entertainments.

From this period we may date the Clubs of Artists and Amateurs, which were so

* Two well known works.

common during the last age, and which have been continued under different names, even to our times. The first of these which enjoyed a great reputation, is the famous *Society of the Temple, (Société du Temple)* where the Grand Prior congregated on stated days, all that Paris then boasted in literature and the arts. Some years afterwards, was formed, under a regimen equally gay, but far less luxurious, the *Society of the Cellar, (Societé du Caveau)* among the founders of which, were Piron, Duclos, Fuselier, the younger Crébillon, Boucher, Rameau, Bernard, and Collé. Never did humour, spirit, and taste, erect a more singular tribunal of criticism. Its decisions were pronounced in songs, and often too, upon the productions of its own members. The triumph of the ridiculous, the absence of all pretensions, the difficult union of bitter malice with an unalterable security of intercourse, very speedily advanced the *Caveau* to high celebrity. Persons of the first distinction, even the Count

de Maurepas himself, at that period, prime minister, solicited the favour of being admitted.

After the dispersion of the associates of the *Caveau*, M. Pelletier, the farmer-general, established a dinner at his own house, many of the old visitors of which, still survive, and can remember having seen STERNE and GARRICK during their abode in Paris. At a later period, the *Societies of the Vaudeville, and of the modern Caveau*, by attaching too much importance to the dishes at their table, and giving too much publicity to the manifestation of their pleasures, seem to have had less regard for their enjoyments than for the fame of their cook, and the notoriety of some of their members. The disagreeable rule which imposes on every member the task of writing a poetical tribute, the rivalry, and its immediate consequence the jealousy, which rarely fails to spring up between men who cultivate the same branch of literature, and wrestle always on the same ground, too

often put self-love to the rack, and excite bickerings destructive of harmony, gaiety, and social happiness. Perhaps it is essentially necessary to a society of this sort, desirous of preserving all these advantages, that it should be composed of men, whose talents, wit, and situations in life are of various kinds, so that superiority in different lines may not become the object of direct comparison, nor the pretext for undue usurpation.

There exists in Paris the model of an union of this description. The estimable body of artists who have founded it, meet every fortnight to an unceremonious dinner, in a retired place, just calculated for a company of twenty-five persons, among whom are poets, musicians, painters, performers, sculptors, and even a physician, who is not sorry to find occasional opportunities to join such agreeable society. Far from inviting the attention of the public, which might be a feather in their cap, but never is an addition to pleasure, these

amiable companions have the more wit in consequence of their making the less parade of it, and the greater enjoyment of their natural gaiety, from having no one challenged by their ostentation to keep a register of their follies. Poetical impromptus are instantly set to music by the composer, executed by the singer, and sometimes suggest to the painter the idea of a caricature. But these productions, the offspring of jocund hilarity, vanish with it, and have no object beyond that of agreeably filling up the hour which gives them birth.

I met a Neapolitan gentleman, some time ago in the country, with whom I had formerly became acquainted at the house of his father, the Marquis of Caraccioli. He had conceived a very high opinion of the French artists of that period, and with many demonstrations of pleasure recalled to my recollection, the delightful spring of 1765, which we had spent with Madame de Lyonne at Epinay, where Vernet, Lagrenée, Coustou, Souflot, Lekain, Caillau, Sedaine,

and Grétry passed several weeks together. "I have travelled through every country in Europe," added he, "and have seen nothing for spirit and amiable qualities united with talent, which could be compared to that assemblage of celebrated artists. The model is lost even in France, and it is very doubtful if it will ever be found again." As a complete answer to this declaration, I invited my Neapolitan friend to dine one day at la G*** when a meeting was certain. I conducted him to a Traiteurs' of unostentatious appearance, but to whom his guests remained constant as a recompence for services which he had rendered them in less happy times. The eating-room was decorated with simplicity, but with taste; the table served without extravagance, but with abundance. During the early part of the repast, we were occupied with news relating to the republic of arts:—The sale of a picture, a new piece, the annunciation of a concert, the death of a distinguished artist, became in turn, the sub-

ject of a conversation, upon which the stranger, beside whom I was seated, had oftener than once occasion to remark with what grace, ease, and learning devoid of pedantry, many of the company expressed their sentiments. The conversation insensibly ceased to be general, and I had an opportunity of answering the questions which he asked, respecting the different persons in whose society he was placed without knowing them but by reputation. "What," said he, "is that great young man who speaks little, but whose remarks are extremely pertinent, to all the points which are discussed? He hardly appears to be above thirty-five years of age, notwithstanding this enormous club depending from his powdered *grecque* of very ancient date!"—"That is one of our most esteemed painters. Though still young, he already enjoys a brilliant and merited celebrity. Finer in colour than in design, he follows the example of Rubens, whom he appears to have taken for his model. He has, as you re-

marked at the late exhibition, something of the exuberance of fancy, and of the firmness of pencilling, which distinguish the chief of the Flemish school, into some of whose blemishes he also falls. He is a man of retired habits, laborious and unassuming, and without further experience of the world than may be gathered from the windows of his painting room.

"On the right of this painter, you doubtless recognize the greatest of our tragedians. Hearken to his reasoning on the subjects of his profession, and you will not be surprised at the superiority he has attained. The study of a new part absorbs him for three whole months; for he is not content with simply becoming master of the poet's verse,—he must be able to identify himself with the character; and the astonishing illusion which he has produced in many of his representations, is no less to be attributed to the severity of manners and costume which he has introduced upon the stage, than to his genius and the vast resour-

ces of his incomparable talents.—Removed from the cares, the toils, and the thoughts of the theatre, he presents himself to you in no other light than as an amiable man, and sometimes even as a great child, whom the slightest matter distracts or disquiets."—

"Tell me quickly, I beseech you, whether or no I am deceived in the opinion I have formed of that man in the chestnut coloured coat, who does the honours of one end of the table with so awkward an air?"—"You are speaking of the most able man in France; and you will acknowledge the truth, when apprized that this stranger, (whom Prussia gave us) has for twenty-five or thirty years been enthroned on his own proper authority, in *full* controul over the fine arts, which he never cultivated, of which he understands nothing, and which he has nevertheless succeeded in rendering tributary to his sovereign will. You find him here, because he is to be met every where, where there is a good dinner, a good bargain, or a good dupe to make."

"Opposite *Manlius* is one of our modern Orpheuses. This excellent composer has in some of his works combined the beauties of Gluck and Piccinni by adopting a system in which their separate styles are reconciled and blended in a natural manner. He is among the small number of those who so agreeably suit the words of the writer to the notes of the gammut, and who are listened to with equal pleasure in a church and in an orchestra. His character is worthy of his genius and talent * * * * * * * I am interrupted to allow you to hear an anecdote told with much wit and originality, by one of our painters, whose production you admired above all the other pictures."—"How! is that the French *Vandyke*, to whom I know nothing comparable in the present day, nor superior in antiquity, for truth, elegance, variety of form, beauty of flesh, grace of composition, and grand taste in his accessary parts?"—"It is the same, and I perceive that I have nothing to teach you on the sub-

ject of his works; I may add however, that they have bestowed upon him a fortune, of which he makes the most noble use: his house is the rendezvous of talents of every kind, and he there sets the example of that honourable brotherhood which it is less rare to see subsisting among artists, than among men of letters."

"The person whose sallies and *Calembourgs** provoke such continued bursts of laughter on the other side of the room, bears a name famous in painting. His father, whom you formerly knew, and from whom he has not at all degenerated, participated with M. de Bievre the sceptre of *Calembourg*, a matter which did not prevent him from producing some masterpieces. His son has turned to advantage his passion for horses, which he paints to a degree of perfection unattained by any of his predecessors in the art. The picture

* Equivoques founded generally on the ambiguous meaning of the words played upon.

of a battle which he has finished, assures him a distinguished rank among the best painters of this class. This artist has discovered the secret of supporting a celebrated name, and of transmitting it to his son, who promises to pursue a brilliant carreer on the course where his father and grand-father are so illustrious."

"Tell me if this fat fellow in a green coat, who is always laughing, and laughing by himself, be very merry? Is his physiognomy, so round and open, very indicative of frankness?"—"You have guessed rightly: this man in spite of his natural mask, is sour, envious, and deceitful. He is a master-mason who gives himself out for an architect, and who has been taken for such at a time when he thought himself happy in being permitted to sleep in the street. He has built some houses for Fruiterers in the faubourgs, patched up some barracks in *la cité* and has fully convinced himself that he is a *Mansard*. What more would he gain were he really so? He has realized a

fortune, and would in his retreat enjoy repose, comfort, health, all the good things of life which so rarely fall to the lot of true merit, if the low jealousy with which he is tormented, did not doom him to eternal suffering on account of the success and happiness of others."

"Would you like to contemplate a frank and easy gaiety, superior endowments in a benevolent nature, a soul elevated without pride, and ability without presumption? Look at the little man on my right hand who sets about telling you a story *of no more consequence than nothing*, in which every word is a pleasant trait, every gesture a piece of humour. He has been long united in friendship with the great painter whom you have surnamed the French Vandyke, and this connexion, to which the love of the arts seems to impart a new charm, is the source of numerous actions performed under circumstances equally honourable to the one and to the other."

"It is long since I partook of so agree-

able an entertainment," (said my Neapolitan, laughing heartily at the story of a Gascon emigrant, which one of the party was telling in a most witty and original manner;) "and that which strikes me as very honourably distinguishing this association of men of talents, is a reciprocal good-will which appears to exclude every feeling of self-love."—"Don't trust to that," answered I; in point of fact, with regard to self-love, we possess that here as well as what may be better. Take a good look at this great boy who is balancing himself upon his chair, with an air of so much no-meaning. He has found out the way, (and that was not very easy) to have more vanity than merit. His politeness is of a kind which warns you to be off your guard against him; his self-complacency and his notions of his own perfections are so immovably fixed, that he is more surprised than angry that any other person should become the object of eulogy in his presence;—he has, it is said, critics in his pay, whose pens he

directs, and with the assistance of whom, he deals blows upon his rivals, the more dangerous from his knowing better than any one else, the side on which they are vulnerable;—but it would not be difficult to persuade me that self-love and the love of the arts were so identified in him, that he only deemed it the discharge of a duty to both, to say all the good possible of himself and all the evil possible of others. He is a man to drive the most experienced flatterers into despair; because, let them praise him as highly as their powers extend, they never can go beyond the excellent opinion he entertains of himself.

"As if it were in contrast to a character so peculiar, we might fancy that chance alone had not placed near him, that young man so modest in demeanour, and so distinguished for ability. His début has been marked by a triumph, the more flattering since his own competitors have proclaimed it.—I recall to memory this circumstance alike honourable to the young artist and to

his rivals; but with so potent a stimulus to emulation, is he not subject to a heavy accusation for the afflicting indifference, to which he has abandoned himself, and which robs France of the *Chefs d'œuvre* which so brilliant an essay entitled her to expect? Perhaps he thinks he has done enough for his fame; perhaps (for even modesty has her self-love) he fears that new efforts might not carry him beyond his first attempt; perhaps in fine, (and this supposition is the most probable, for sensibility the source of great talents, is also the source of mortification,) perhaps some secret sorrow destroys all the energy of his soul? There are moments when the utmost that it is in our power to do, is to live."—"I observe a little lower down, a man who seems to me to acquit himself very gaily of that obligation. What a full-blown face! What an air of health, of happiness?"—"That is a fellow of spirit, who, in a blessed hour proposed to himself this problem which he has so ably resolved—*to reconcile the taste for*

literature with the pursuit of wealth. He cultivates a branch of commerce, the products of which are indebted to the arts for increased value and perfection, and he renders the luxury of Europe tributary to French taste and industry."

"His neighbour, by an effort more generous, has in many cases, sacrificed his interest to his fame. Worthy competitor of Etienne and of Plantin, he does honour to a name already famous in the typographic art, which he has carried to perfection by the most useful and ingenious inventions. The monuments which he has reared to the Latin and French classics, confer on him as a printer, a reputation, to which as a learned man and an author, he had before a good right to aspire;—a reputation that exalts still higher the renown for probity by which he would be distinguished, even at the era when that virtue might happily be more common than it is in our time."

"What is he almost opposite to you whose physiognomy possesses, I can't tell

what of the Sardonic, which imparts an expression quite peculiar to features in other respects altogether insignificant?"—"That is a man of literature, well-informed, very malignant, and very amiable; qualities which seem incompatible; and the combination of which is one of the mysteries of his character. Endowed with an original turn of mind, he possesses the avidity without the relish for celebrity; he renounces the tranquillity which he loves, and disdains the glory which he pursues. Without making himself master of any thing, he aspires to the possession of every thing, in order to have the privilege of appreciating the merit and the exertions of those whom success renders proud. The interval which separates ignorance from knowledge, (the folly of fine wit,) does not, if we may believe him, appear long, but to the eyes of the vanity which measures it; and the reputation of a rich man excepted, all the others, according to him, might purchase themselves a name, and are almost always paid

more than they are worth." "This personage is one of that class which we, like the English, call *characters*; intercourse with such a man could not fail of being amusing; and when one is not his dupe, I imagine one must be charmed to be his accomplice."

"Observe, I beg of you, that other original, of another kind, who harrangues for a quarter of an hour in a nasal and sententious tone."—"Who? That thin man, who is every minute adjusting a very youthful perriwig, upon a pretty old head?"—"The same; he is a lachrymose composer whose name is of equal value to a drama. All his divisions breathe sentiment and truth, and though his contemporaries deny that he is acquainted with the first rules of his art he has found means to be extravagantly successful. Never will he lend himself to any subject which is not most strictly moral, and he very recently refused to set an opera to music, the heroine of which, pre-

sumed to marry without the consent of her parents.

"He has composed a collection of psalms for the use of schools, among which is a duet between *Vice and Virtue*, which he proposes should be sung every year at the renewal of the classes, instead of *Veni Creator*. As there are people who permit themselves to laugh at this moralist in *counter-point*, it may be proper to inform them that his works have gained him more than the Chefs-d'œuvre of Gluck and of Sacchini ever acquired for their immortal authors."

Our conversation was at this moment interrupted by the youngest of the company, who rose, and said in a loud voice, displaying at the same time a sheet of paper, which I had seen passing during an hour, through many hands at the further end of the chamber, "Gentlemen, I offer you this for a voluntary subscription; the produce is destined for the widow of an estimable

artist, whom you all knew, and who has left no inheritance to his children, but the remembrance of his talents and his virtues." "Adopted," was the cry from every quarter. "I will take charge of the engraving," said, as he emptied his glass, a fat man whom I knew by his Alsacian accent. "At six francs each impression," "and I subscribe for four," added the neighbour of the engraver as he signed the paper, which was in a moment covered with twenty-five or thirty signatures. The sketch was passed round with the list: nothing could be more ingenious than this humorous composition, in which some originals, ridiculously notorious, are represented with the heads of animals, which without borrowing any thing of the resemblance of portraits, wittily lead to a knowledge of the characters. My companion, who greatly admired this clever design, liberally subscribed for twenty copies, "I ought to inform the gentlemen who subscribe," added a little man, (as round as a ball, wiping his mouth,) that they will

receive *gratis* with the engraving, an explanation in a ballad which I shall have the honour to sing to them at the desert, if God grants me life till then;—for it has been foretold me that I shall die before the end of a dinner."

The promise of the little man was received with acclamations of pleasure: "There," said my companion, "is a figure which ought to be painted in every eating-room, to create an appetite."—"You will add, when you have heard him, and to inspire joy.—This is from his superiority *our* singer. He sings from instinct, and bears about songs, as the *good man* bears about fables. With a great deal of wit, a perfect natural organ, and an everlasting fund of good humour, he might already perhaps have reaped the harvest of his talents, if less intimate with low life, he had more rarely borrowed its disgusting jargon.

"I am not the only Italian here, if I may judge by a particular accent which strikes my ear, and reminds me of my *Cara Patria*."

"The person you point out to me, holds the foremost rank in his profession. A worthy rival of Servandoni, in that department of painting which is connected with the stage, he has often carried the magic of decorations to that pitch at which illusion appeared to be confounded with reality. Born with genius, with that vivacity and richness of imagination which at once embraces all that can be done for a subject, it is probable that he would enlarge the limits of an art, the rules, of which retard its progress, if circumstances put it in his power at the same time to execute his vast conceptions, and to develop all the resources of his rare talent.

"I notice near my countryman, a little old man, whose few grey hairs hardly cover the nape, but whose eyes still sparkle with intelligence: if this be not a statuary I am but an indifferent observer of mankind."

"He is indeed one of the modern Phidias, to whom our school boasts the justest title. To his noble Chisel was reserved the glory of

modelling the features of the patriarch of Ferney, of whom he never speaks but with that sympathetic veneration, and that enthusiasm which a sculptor like him ought to feel for such a model.

"Without quitting this corner of the table, give a glance at that big man with white hair, whose facial angle forms an acute angle of about sixty degrees, and whose flat nose extends itself upon his upper lip."—"So far as I can judge of this little face, buried between two enormous shoulders, there is something exotic in the features of which it is composed."—"He is a native of the shores of the Baltic and a passionate admirer of the works of art which the last age produced, and which I greatly fear will not be bequeathed to posterity. His first visits to Paris, whither he was led by his master passsion, were directed to our chief painters, whose port-folio's he ransacked, and purchased at high prices all that they contained, which seemed worthy of a place in his collection. A taste of this pro-

minent nature which does not correct itself within a certain period, generally becomes a mania. That of our amateur reached such a pitch as to destroy his fortune, which passed entirely from his strong-box to his port-folio, in the shape of fifty enormous cartoons, in which all his wealth is comprehended. Even now, he encroaches on his pleasures, and even on his necessaries, in order to increase this immense collection. Wherever you meet him, you are certain of finding him with a drawing under his arm, going to, or returning from the purchase of some *Crocade* of Carracchi or Paul Veronese, without dreaming that he is applying to this acquisition, the money which was destined to pay his rent, or his taylor's bill."

The dessert and the Champaigne were served;—the servants retired; our Momus chaunted his song, to which the immoderate laughter of all the company served as chorus. It was nine o'clock when we rose from table, delighted with the guests,

and more convinced than ever, that the persons who are best acquainted with the enjoyments of life, are those, who at the same time cultivate the arts and friendship.

No. VIII.—23d Nov. 1813.

AN EVENING OF THE GREAT WORLD.

Combien d'oiseaux de différent plumage,
Divers de goût, d'instinct et de ramage,
En santillant, font entendre, a-la-fois,
Le gazoullis de leurs confuses voix.

VOLT. EPIT. en vers.

La Ville est partagée en diverses Sociétés, qui sont comme autant de petites républiques, qui ont leurs lois, leurs mœurs, leurs usages, et leur jargon.

LA BRUYERE, Caract.

THAT which was true in the days of Bruyere is still true in our time, though

with a few modifications. At the period when this immortal writer published his *Caracteres*, every one of the little republics of which he speaks, had its own distinct territory, separated from others by unchangeable boundaries; and so great was the difficulty of communication between them, that they scarcely knew each other but by hear-say. Towards the close of the last century, political convulsions overthrew all these barriers, and the new order of things which replaced them, has left on the interval of separation, a gentle declivity, by means of which an easy intercourse is established. In my youth, rich women sometimes mounted step by step, to the highest rank; but then it was upon a bridge of gold. Under the sanction of the name they had purchased, they appeared at court; next day they were to be found in the midst of their families surrounded by vulgar domestics; they had been out of their proper sphere the day before, and fancied themselves out of their proper sphere the day they were in it.

Vanity, which plays so distinguished a part in society and in societies, is very obvious even in the titles it assumes. In every city, a certain number of a privileged class of men and women who associate together, call themselves *the World*. In Paris *the World* is divided betwen the *fashionable World* and the *great World*.* *Bon ton* is the arbitress of the one; *etiquette* is the queen of the other: with some slight shades of difference, their usages are the same.

Company and the *spectacles* occupy there, the great part of the life of a man of the world: the first of these recreations constitute for him *days of guests, and days of custom (de jours priés et de jours d'habitude.)*. In both, freedom and confidence generally give zest to repasts at which old friends meet together at the same table. These dinners possess nothing in common with formal parties, where the master of a

* Le beau monde, et le grand monde.

house, of which one does not often know who is the mistress, receives, as at an ordinary, a crowd of people, who being at a loss how to pass the evening, begin it with him at the dinner hour.

Set dinner, and evening parties, are now, as I have at all times seen them, a sort of lottery, in which lucky chances are not the most commonly met with; of which those most frequently complain, who put nothing in, and those who have already made a fortune by them. Even I, I have witnessed and I lament those *charming suppers* of other times, rendered, I am ready to acknowledge, more delicious from my then enjoying a young spirit, a vivid imagination, and an excellent appetite. "O! such society as that of Madame d'Epinai," (said honest Merville to me!) "Never shall we look upon its like again! Don't you remember in particular, one *fête* which she gave us in 57?"—"I remember that you were at that period about twenty-five or twenty-six years of age, and that your con-

nexion with the beautiful Emily de R**** began that day."—"Eh! my God," continued the old president d'Abancourt, "you recall to my memory those ravishing evenings of Madame de Forcalquier, where Carmontelle composed his first proverbs."—"Gentlemen," interrupted a third, "speak of the suppers of Madame de la Popelinière; where could you meet, I do not say at this era, but within the period of your remembrance, such an assemblage of men of high station, of men of literary attainments, and of eminent artists?—And those of Pelletier whom you have not remembered at all!—And those of Madame de la Reynière where I saw *Touzet* for the first time!—*Touzet*, that prince of *Mystificators*, whose talent was displayed in a vein of pleasantry of that kind, the loss of which we ought not perhaps to regret."

This little colloquy took place last Saturday, at the Countess Eliza de Fontbonne's in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where a party of acquaintances, about my

age, had got together a full hour before dinner was announced. The Countess was still at her *toilette,* and the Count had not returned from St. Cloud. We chatted as we stood round the fire place, and I had taken up the defence of modern times which the President d'Abancourt was lashing without mercy, when the mistress of the house, in all the pomp of dress and beauty, appeared to plead its cause. Madame de Fontbonne took her station at the chimney corner in a *fateuil* reserved for herself alone. I may remark, by the by, that this custom of keeping a particular place and seat for the mistress of the house, is now very old; the *bon-ton,*—even politeness makes it a law not to offer it to any other female whatever may be her rank and quality; a very advanced age and the title of *Maréchale* alone, formerly authorized an exception to this general rule.

By degrees the young people and the ladies arrived; those being early or late in

proportion to the importance which they wished to attach to themselves, or the effect they desired to produce. The first occupation or the latter, (after embracing or saluting the Countess according to the degree or nature of their intimacy with her) appeared to me to be, as in times past, the examination and criticism, each with her neighbour, of the dress of all the others. I had already noticed a lusty Baroness de Sarnet, whose deep coloured robe, and Chinese head-dress contrasted most shockingly with her years, her figure, and the marked expression of her countenance; the pretty Madame de L*** of whom I have often spoken in these pages, was two seats apart from the lusty Baroness, to whose chair she advanced, and complimented her in the most obliging tone, upon the elegance and good taste displayed in her dress. I passed behind the *fateuil* of Madame de L***, and whispered in her ear with unaffected passion,

"Quoi! vous avez le front de trouver celabeau."

"What! have you the impudence to think that becoming."

"My good man," answered she laughing, "go back to your cell; read your Bruyere over again, and you will learn the occasion on which a woman may praise the *toilette* of her rival." This word rival demanded an explanation, for which I will take another opportunity.

The conversation which precedes a grand entertainment is usually confined to the common places of politeness, to observations upon the weather not remarkable for depth of research, and to remarks upon new plays and spectacles. About seven o'clock the Count returned from St. Cloud, and with much grace apologized to the ladies for his detention. A quarter of an hour after, it was announced that *Madame, the Countess was served.* Every body rose;

the president, who is always the last to renounce old customs, offered his hand to his cousin Madame de L***, to lead her to the dining-room. "Willingly," (said she to him in a low voice, as she accepted his hand), "but I give you fair notice, my dear friend, without establishing it as a precedent; for these gallantries are not the fashion any where but at the *Place-Royale*." "So much the worse for the Faubourg, Saint-Germain," replied the President!

The mistress of the mansion having regulated the seats of honour, next herself and her husband, by designating by name the persons who were to fill them, the rest of the company placed themselves as conveniency directed. The president sat down by me. I had detected the glances of a timid and discreet intelligence between a certain Auditor and a very handsome little prude, whose motions I was watching for my own private guidance. At the crisis of sitting down to table, she raised her large blue eyes towards the young

gentleman, who prudently kept himself disengaged, and then bent them sweetly upon the empty chair at her side, and that which being also next to mine, the president unluckily took possession of. The Auditor understood every thing to a miracle, and hurried to seize a place which, doubtless, no man could occupy without tasting equal pleasure and advantage. "If you are, by chance, still one of this world forty years hence," said I to the president, "consult this little lady who will then probably be a devotee, and this Auditor who will then perhaps be a magistrate; you will see if they do not talk of the dinners of Madame de Fontbonne, as you were not long since talking to me about the suppers of Madame Forcalquièr."

It would be absurd to expect any general conversation at a ceremonious dinner; which it is almost as ridiculous to give, as to raise your voice at, and endeavour to fix the attention of forty persons, the majority of whom you hardly know: it is therefore a

matter of necessity that you enter into chat with those, near whom chance has placed you. After having listened, during the two first courses, to the grumbler d'Abancourt on my right, who was even unwilling to acknowledge our progress in the ingenious arts, as demonstrated by an examination of the exquisite fashion of the plate, the beauty of the candelabras, the elegance of the centre ornament, the brilliancy of the glass, and in a word, the rich variety of so many objects in which the luxury of the banquet was comprized, I addressed myself to my neighbour on my left, and it was not long before I discovered how much reason I had to lament that I had so long delayed availing myself of so pleasant an entertainment. Never was the boldness of folly displayed to my eyes under a shape more comic, under features more congenial with the *gross* soul of which it bore the impressions. The *Sénéchal* of the comedy of *Originaux*, is but a faint copy of this burlesque personage. One trait of his conversation will suffice for

a specimen. He was telling me of the mortification which the marriage of one of his nephews had occasioned him. "Do you know," added he, "that the girl whom this ass has been persuaded to marry, has nothing, that which is called nothing, neither physical nor moral. As for the physical, she is ugly; and as for the moral, she is not worth a farthing."

Coffee was taken at table. On entering the drawing rooms where the lighted incense pots exhaled all the perfumes of the east, we met a number of persons who had assembled in consequence of invitations to spend the evening. The crowd soon became so dense, that it was indispensably necessary to break the circle of women, by distributing them round the tables where different games were played. When the parties were arranged, the Countess passed on to the gallery where M. de Fontbonne was walking and discussing matters with some great personages. She whispered something to him, and went out accompa-

nied by two or three ladies, without any body, except myself perhaps, noticing her absence. She returned in about an hour. "How has Grassini sung," said I to her, in a way not to be heard by any one but herself. "Who told you that I had come from the Bouffons, wicked Argus?"—"The fashion, Madame, which would not have failed to exclaim loudly against you, had you not shewn yourself to-night in your box."—"Well! you have guessed rightly. I have been hearing two scenes of *Horaces*; the music is *charming*; this is my critical opinion: Grassini is admirable; she is the only Italian singer (at least of all that I have heard,) who possesses any thing beyond a throat. I came away after the fine air, *Frenar vorrei le lacrime*, which she sung in a style perfectly ravishing."

At the end of the games which finished before eleven o'clock, M. Carbonelle sat down at the piano. The music was fine, and at times it might have been confessed that parts of *Didon*, *Armide*, and the *Da-*

naïdes could support a comparison with *Pirrothe* the *Destruzione di Gerusalemme*, with other masterpieces of the same kind and country.

About midnight they would play at *Proverbes;* in an instant a little theatre was constructed at one end of the gallery. They began with the *Enragé*, an old *Proverbe* of Carmontelle's, and concluded with the *Songe d'un Honnête Homme.** This little piece which formed part of a collection published last year by Madame Victorine M***, under the title of *Soirées de Société*, possesses all the merit which can belong to a production of the kind,—truth, nature, and grace.

Supper followed this entertainment. Very few of the company sat down to

* This species of amusement consists in getting up a sort of play *improvisatore*, which is founded upon a proverb given as the subject for developement. When ably sustained it produces more amusement than may at first be anticipated.—Tr.

table; others were served with ices and punch; and about two o'clock when I left the rooms, (as much gratified as a man of my time of life could be, with an evening so noisy,) there still remained some gamesters, female as well as male, who beheld with pain, the approaching decision of their last rubber of whist, an enjoyment in which the whole business, pleasure, and hope of their lives is involved.

No. IX.—6th JAN. 1814.

MY PROJECTS FOR THE YEAR 1814.

The Hermit and his Physician.

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.

HOR. Ode 4. lib. 1.

La vie est courte, ne portons pas trop loin nos espérances.

Life is short, let us not extend our hopes too far.

THE Hermit, (after a fit of coughing.) "Without doubt, my dear Doctor, old age is a very fine thing, but you must own it has many inconveniencies."

The Doctor.—"Cicero, as you must remember, could find but four trifling ones *First*. It prevents us from acting. *Secondly*. It brings infirmities in its train. *Thirdly*. It estranges us from nearly all the pleasures of life. *Fourthly*. It brings us nearer to death."

The Hermit.—"As we range under one or other of these classes nearly all the troubles of life, you must allow these small inconveniencies are equivalent to a great number of others. Nevertheless, Cicero might have added by way of supplement—The temper which age gives us, the gaiety which it takes from us, and the continual restlessness in which it holds us."

The Doctor.—"This querulous reflection which your illness, and not your age suggests to you, loses all its authority in the mouth of a man, whose example is a decisive refutation of his opinion. I have been acquainted with you these twenty years, and (setting aside a fit of the gout or rheumatism,) I never saw you of a more even tem-

per, and possessed of greater ease and gaiety, or of a more philosophical tranquillity of mind."

The Hermit.—"An exception does not destroy a rule, even where it is as complete, as you seem to believe; but the fact is, that if I wished to convince myself of the weakness of my moral and physical faculties, I should discover proof of it in a new frame of mind, against which I struggle with all the energy of my character; and which manifests itself in a sort of repugnance that from time to time breaks out, even towards the very things which I love, and am accustomed to. These books which surround me, to which I owe, not the most striking, but the sweetest pleasures of my life—I look at them, at times, with the eye of the senator, Pococurante.* I say to myself, as I glance over this pile of paper, (the contents of some of which are not

* A person in the Romance of Candide.

worth the cost of binding,) that these four or five thousand volumes, would, according to the calculation of the learned Bishop of Avranches, be reduced to a small duodecimo, if they contained only things true or useful, or such as had never been written before."

The Doctor.—"That's your disease."

The Hermit.—"My business with those whom I love most, is often a trouble to me. The slowness, and dotage of my old servant, become insupportable to me."

The Doctor.—"That's your disease."

The Hermit.—"I am as much astonished as if I had just made the discovery, that there are so many fools, blockheads, and knaves in the world."

The Doctor.—"That's your disease."

The Hermit.—"My disease! My disease! You treat me like the *Géronte* of *Légataire*—my disease! 'Tis the register of my baptism."

The Doctor.—"Not at all; old age is a relative term. One man of seventy-four

years of age is younger than another at fifty. You are not yet old; you are ill; your nerves are bad."

The Hermit.—"How I should laugh were it not for the fear of my cough! To ascribe to me the disorder of a languid girl! You would be somewhat embarrassed if I were to ask you to explain this nervous disorder."

The Doctor.—"I should explain it to you as the physician in *Molière* explains the virtue of opium, and my definition must not be laughed at, for as Doctor Pangloss assures us, there is no effect without a cause. It is not given to physicians or even to philosophers to know all things."

The Hermit.—"If you are not acquainted with the cause of the evil, how can you cure it?"

The Doctor.—"As I grow wheat without knowing how it springs up; as I prescribe a medicine without knowing how it operates."

The Hermit.—" I am then nervous: well be it so. What is to be done in this case?"

The Doctor.—" Resume during the winter an exercise which you have omitted for some months, and as soon as the first birds announce the approach of Spring, leave Paris and take a little tour."

The Hermit.—" Do you know, my dear doctor, that among other complaints which I have against Hippocrates and his clan, (complaints which I will one day explain to you with frankness,) one of the greatest, is the custom of paying no attention to the state and situation of the sick man, in prescribing the remedy. Nothing, in my opinion, is more absurd than these general directions in medicine. I shall never be reconciled to your profession till I see it practised with reference to individuals, and not to the species. To order a poor devil of a tin-smith of the Rue des Prouvaires, who gains a crown per day by his work, to apply himself to a regimen

of Quinquina wine to cure himself of a fever;—is it not to bid him make his will? To prescribe to the wife of a churchwarden of the parish of St. Jacques-du-Haut-Pas the waters at Toplitz for the purpose of putting her in a situation to become a mother;—is it not to condemn, without mercy her husband to die without heirs? Your directions to me are much of the same kind. I have become a Hermit and you bid me run over the world. Appointed observer of the Parisian manners, can I fulfill my task on the banks of the Loire, on the mountains of Dauphiny, or on the plains of Languedoc?"

The Doctor.—"This is just the point to which I wished to bring you. Why do you think yourself confined in your observations on our manners to the walls of the capital? Are all Frenchmen in Paris? Many of your correspondents have already asked you the same question. Let Paris be the centre of your operations; let all your ties like those of Arachne meet in one point; nothing

can be better: but enlarge your web, fasten the threads to our provinces, and (to continue the comparison to the end) at the slightest sensation you feel, come out of your hole and seize your prey, even at the very extremity of your toils."

The Hermit.—"I have thought of this more than once, but our Romance writers, and our dramatic poets have already said so much on the follies of the country * * * *."

The Doctor.—"As of the follies of the *Marais*, by hearsay, and without the smallest regard to the changes which time and circumstances have wrought there. Besides, there is a point of view more useful, and more general, in which the country has never been examined, and which you may take up. The shades of colour which distinguish the manners, customs, and habits of different parts of France; these are things which it is important to know and to compare, sometimes for the amusement, and yet oftener for the instruction of the capital."

The Hermit—"I begin to think, my dear doctor, that your prescription is not impracticable, and I am almost determined to undertake, at the return of the lovely season, some excursions in the different provinces, when I shall take care, as you may very well suppose, to travel incognito. Once agreed on the project, let us talk of the means of executing it. I am not sufficiently active to set out like J. J. Rousseau, with a stick in my hand and carrying my baggage. I am not young enough to ride on horseback, nor rich enough to travel post."

The Doctor.—"There remains still, that which is the best mode for a man who leaves home to see others. The public stage, a diligence, a packet-boat, a coche d'eau, are excellent cabinets of observation; the models thrust themselves as it were under the eyes of the painter, and I need not attempt to inform you what may be drawn from such situations."

The Hermit.—"There is another point

settled! Now my dear doctor, where shall I go? This is a day for submission to my physician: write me down an itinerary in the form of a prescription; this will afford you an opportunity to dilate on climate and temperature; two words which play a great part in the faculty's dictionary, when at a loss what to say.

The Doctor.—"It is fortunate for you I am more your friend than your physician, or else * * * * *."

The Hermit.—"I feel the full force of this *quos ego*. No matter doctor; present the cup, and like Alexander I will drink without hesitation."

The Doctor.—"I return to your imputation, and I ask whether it be possible for a man of sense to push obstinacy so far as to deny the influence of climate."

The Hermit.—"I deny it not doctor, I only doubt it. I know very well that the author of *The Spirit of the Laws*, whose authority is certainly of great weight with

me, has said, that climate may be distinguished by degrees of sensibility, as well as by degrees of latitude:—that he believes he can discover in the geographical positions of different countries, the origin of the qualities and defects of their inhabitants: but experience, whose authority is superior even to that of Montesquieu has demontsrated to me, that the same country in a few ages, has been successively inhabited by a people the most brave, the most enterprising, the most free, and by a people the most cowardly, the most lazy, and the greatest slaves on earth. I have seen, in contradiction to his system, warlike Caffres under the equator, and timid Laplanders near the pole: in a word, doctor, nothing appears to me less established than this influence of climate about which so much is said."

The Doctor.—"As to morals, say as much as you please, 'tis no affair of mine. I don't disturb myself with seeking whence come the vices of men, I look only to the

origin of their diseases; and this same experience, which you are continually invoking, convinces me that the examination of the climate is justly, one of the fundamental laws of Hygeia. This question is, however, idle here. When you walk in your room, it matters not how long or how broad it is, or which side of it is north, east, west, or south; you will travel as you walk, to change air, to take an exercise which is useful to your health; you will never stop more than three or four days in a place, and it is therefore quite indifferent whether you direct your steps one way or another. You may take that road which is most agreeable to you."

The Hermit.—"This is what I call talking like a friend; your brother doctors are not always in the habit of speaking either so clearly or so laconically."

The Doctor.—"There are professions, such as ours and your own, in which one must sometimes speak so as not to be understood. Reduce a lawyer to the simple

discussion of a fact. Take from him his citations, his amplifications, his exordiums, his perorations, and see what would become of the eloquence of the bar. Desire a Journalist to insert nothing of the truth of which he is not convinced, to praise nothing which is not worthy of estimation, to censure nothing which he does not understand; take from him the report of yesterday, the erudition of to-day, and the interest of the morrow, and see what would become of the daily papers, even the *Gazette de Santé.*"

The Hermit.—"*Of health?*"

The Doctor.—"Even the Gazette of health; though there you will find more learning, more truth, and above all, if I dare mention it, more wit than in this or that journal, calling itself literary."

The Hermit.—"Take care, take care doctor; if you throw stones into our garden we will shower a whole quarry into your's."

The Doctor.—"Your stones will kill nobody."

The Hermit.—"I wish I could say as much for **** *coughs.*"

The Doctor.—"There is a good fit of coughing in expiation of your sarcasms against medicine. Do you remember that Molière is dead?"

The Hermit.—"I will give you this evening a place to see *le Malade Imaginaire.*"

The Doctor.—"Adieu, my good Hermit."

The Hermit.—"Adieu, malignant doctor."

The Doctor.—"I recommend you, for your catarrh, my pectoral syrup and the apozem according to my prescription."

The Hermit.—"I will follow it, and am at your mercy. Adieu my friend."

The Doctor, (returning)—"On consideration, neither syrup nor apozem! keep yourself warm and drink plentifully of barley water."

No. X.—15th JAN. 1814.

THE TWELFTH CAKE.

Fabam mimum agunt.

CICERO.

Ils tirent le gateau des rois.

They draw the twelfth-cake.

I HAVE often wished that the prejudices of a people should not be confounded with their customs. The former cannot be avoided with too much perseverance; but it is seldom that any thing is gained by the destruction of the latter. Every prejudice is born of a vice; every national habit takes its rise from a virtue. The demon-

stration of this truth would make this discourse a chapter of morality, but

Trop de morale entraine trop d'ennui.

Too much morality brings with it too much *ennui*; I leave, therefore, the principle to itself, and pass on to those feasts in the course of the year, which I count among the number of old customs, whose venerable authority I see, with regret, grows weaker every day.

This taste was implanted in me from my earliest youth, by one of my maternal uncles, the prior of Armentières, who spent with my father all the time which he did not pass at his priory, that is to say, about eleven months and a half in each year. He had an apartment on the second floor, of which his library occupied the greater part. On a sort of table, *à la Tronchin*, on which he wrote, I still see, in a little cabinet of ebony, a calendar for his own use, which he made up himself at the beginning of every year, and inscribed according to the order of their dates, with the

feasts and birth-days of all his relations, friends, and even acquaintances.

On the arrival of such a day we were sure to receive a bouquet of flowers, for the most part accompanied with a piece of poetry, or a couplet, in the form of a compliment. That which he did for others, he exacted for himself in so absolute a manner, that he disinherited one of his relations for having neglected to write him a letter on the opening of a new year. My uncle, although he exaggerated the importance of these and similar duties, had ideas on this point not far removed from sound morality. I remember in a little comedy, which he composed on this subject, one of the persons of the drama abused this submission to childish customs.

Tous ces grand mots ne m'en imposent guère ;
C'est à l'abus, d'abord, qu'on déclare la guerre ;
Mais l'usage y tenait : on le laisse déchoir,
Et l'usage détruit, entraine le devoir :
Voila, Monsieur, comment avec de telles phrases,
De la société l'on sape enfin les bases.

How many examples did he not cite to us of quarrels made up, and lawsuits between relations terminated by these unions of families which custom formerly prescribed, and which now hardly seem to be tolerated.

Twelfth day, Shrove Tuesday, St. Martin's day, were all then domestic feasts, at which young people found those pleasures and enjoyments for which they are now obliged to look elsewhere. My uncle, the Prior, was acquainted with all the minute ceremonies of these feasts, and applied his whole attention to their observance. On such days he invested himself with full authority as master of the house; ordered the repasts, took charge of the invitations, appointed the place of every body at table, and observed that every thing was done according to his rules.

Of all our family feasts, that of Twelfth Day was in his eyes the most important, and therefore it was always celebrated with peculiar pomp. The remembrance which

I yet retain of it never permits me to read without sentiments of the most lively emotion, the charming description which M. de Chateaubriand has given us of this ancient festival, at which I have so often assisted. The family was numerous, the parlour for the company was large; I alone am left of all those who partook the good cheer!

"Unsophisticated minds," (says the author of the Genius of Christianity) "can never recollect without sympathy those hours of relaxation, when the family assembled round the cake, which suggested to the mind the presents of the Magi. The grandfather, during the rest of the year secluded in the retirement of his apartment, appears on this day like the divinity of the paternal hearth. His grandchildren, who have for some time past thought of nothing but this festival, climb his knees, and awaken again in him all the memory of his youth. The countenances of all exhibit gaiety; the hearts of all are light; the

room for the entertainment is decorated, and in honour of the day every one appears drest in his newest habiliments. Amidst the jingling of glasses and bursts of joy, the lots of this ephemeral dignity are drawn, and a sceptre is gained which weighs not too heavy for the hands of the monarch.—Sometimes a little trick is practised which, redoubling the mirth of the subjects and exciting the complaints of the young sovereign alone, elevates to the throne the daughter of the host and the son of a neighbour lately arrived from the army. The young pair blush, as if their crown embarrassed them; the mothers laugh, and the grandfather with a full goblet drinks to the new queen. The curate, who is at the feast, receives for the purpose of distribution, with other assistance, the first part, called the *Poor's Piece*. Old games and a dance, at which some aged domestic supplies the place of musician, prolong their pleasure, and the whole family, nurses, children, tenants, servants, and masters,

mix promiscuously in the mazy wanderings of the ball."

I could not deny myself the pleasure of bringing before my readers this lovely picture, full of gracefulness and truth, though at the hazard of a comparison of which I feel all the disadvantage.

I was reading a few days since the passage which I have just cited to a Mr. Fergus, a scholar, more estimable than orthodox, with whom I had formerly studied, and who did not approve of M. de Chateaubriand's having given to christianity the honour of an institution evidently borrowed from the Greeks and Romans.

"What the devil," said he, knitting his large black eyebrows, "does he talk to us of the Magi and their presents for, when discoursing on a custom whose prophane origin is so well known to us? Who is there that is not acquainted with the amusement of the *King of the Bean* derived to us from the Romans, when the chil-

dren, during the Saturnalia, drew lots for the part of the king of the festival. This custom of the *bean* to trace it still higher, goes back to the Greeks, who made use of beans in the election of their magistrates. We have transplanted to the beginning of January a feast, which the ancients celebrated towards the end of December, in the winter solstice, and which the Romans, if we may believe Lucian, Strabo, and Vossius, had borrowed from the Persians. The election of this temporary king was made at table, as with us, but after having been treated during the short term of his reign, with all the respect and regard due to his rank, the ephemeral monarch was hanged, to terminate the feast. It is proper, however, to add, that he was chosen from among the class of slaves, and still oftener from among the criminals."

"I know very well," (answered I to my learned friend in *us*,) "that by dint of

learning, the charm may be taken from every thing; but I must own that one of the best written discourses on the origin of the King of the Bean would never amuse me half so much as one of those domestic meetings which have latterly become too unfrequent."

"Among the company you keep," interrupted M. Fergus; "for my own part I have only to choose among three parties to which I am invited for this evening, to draw twelfth cake, at one of which I can answer that you will be extremely well received, if you like to accompany me."

He mentioned M. Bruno, another old school-fellow, with whom I was some time a boarder at M. Doppi's, Rue Mazarine. We left the school together, myself to go to College; M. Bruno to follow the profession of his father, a linen-draper, at the Golden Fleece, in the Rue des Marmouzets. We had not seen each other for more than twenty years, but I had always dealt with him, and

I knew he retained some friendship for me. I did not hesitate, therefore to take Fergus at his word.

It was four o'clock when we arrived at this Dean's of the ancient shrievalty. We found the good old man in a room over the shop, which a fashionable merchant of the Rue Vivienne would be in these times ashamed to call his anti-chamber. He was seated by the fire-side in a large arm-chair, of *Utrecht* velvet; a little child on his knees, and two others seated on the ground, who displayed to grand-papa their Punchinellos, their Chinese monkeys, and their leaden soldiers, which they had received as New Year's gifts. A young girl of sixteen or seventeen, assisted an old servant to lay the cloth.—M. Charles Bruno, the younger son, was reading a newspaper, in a loud voice at the window, while an old aunt cut slips of paper of various colours, to put round the bottom of the candles. The Nestor of the

city merchants received me with open arms, and presented me in the most friendly manner to his family, by whom I was greeted in the same affectionate style. It may very well be believed that in the conversation which followed in the chimney-corner between the three old schoolfellows, M. Doppi was not forgotten, and that the phrase, *Do you remember?* occurred more than once in our discourse. The rest of the company came in order; the first was M. Boutard, son-in-law of M. Bruno, and one of the most famous lace-makers in the Rue des Bourdonnais; he brought with him two of his children. M. Boutard is a very proper man, and has no other fault than that of a little too much vanity, on account of the attention he pays to the church of St. Opportune, of which he is the eldest churchwarden. The Abbé Daillot nephew of the patriarch, and vicar of St. Magloire, came next; he was followed by M. Melchior Bruno, Captain of the Ve-

terans of the Barracks Notre Dame des Victoires, who gave his arm to Madame Boutard and her daughter, a little brunette of the most lively figure.

Dinner was served; we waited only for M. Daumont, an old clerk of M. Bruno, and a most intimate friend of the family.—Mademoiselle Françoise Bruno, the aunt, begged her brother to sit down to table, according to the old axiom: *That waiting prevents one from eating, but eating does not prevent one from coming.* Her advice was followed. The grandfather's arm-chair was placed at the head of the table, the back to the fire. Every one stood by his chair, while the father of the family said grace, and seated themselves as soon as he set them the example. A small table for the children, of which aunt Bruno had the direction, had been prepared in one corner of the room.

Daumont came in just as the soup was removed; he announced himself with a

loud laugh, with which I observed he always preceded his jokes, "I see you have waited for me as the Abbé waits for his monks," said he, shaking the hands of the company round, without omitting myself, though I was a stranger to him. The Abbé answered him by a *tarde venientibus ossa*, which produced some mirth.

The tureen being carried away, a twelfth cake was brought before Madame Boutard, who did the honours of the table, on which she bestowed her benediction, tracing there the sign of the cross, and then cut it into eighteen parts. The youngest of the company came forward, which gave the vicar an opportunity of putting in a *surgat junior*, of which, he seemed to take himself a good part. The cake was covered with a napkin, and the dish having been turned round two or three times to prevent all idea of fraud or favour, the child distributed the portions. The first drawn was that for the poor; this was immediately given to the vicar, with the

alms which every one hastened to subscribe; the grandfather was served second; in respect to my age, and being a stranger, I had the third part, in which was discovered *the bean*. My election to the sovereignty of the feast was announced by a round of applause, to which succeeded reiterated exclamations of *Vive le Roi*. I was respectfully invited by my new subjects to make choice of a companion who should share with me the splendour of my exalted dignity. I cast my eyes on Mademoiselle Rose Boutard, who seemed however to be less sensible of the honour of enjoying a throne than displeased at quitting her seat by her young cousin Bruno. The dinner was gay, even a little noisy, and the cries of, the queen drinks, the king drinks, resounded through the whole repast. The precaution which the wise Fergus had taken to bring half a dozen of excellent Bourdeaux wine with him (a precaution which nobody valued more highly than the

Captain) succeeded in putting friend Daumont in high spirits, and the vicar took care not to lose so fine an opportunity as when he emptied his glass to his uncle's health, to tell us, "*Bonum vinum lætificat cor hominis.*" During the dessert, according to custom, we proceeded to choose the great crown officers, and every body admired my penetration, when I chose M. Boutard my minister of finances; Daumont master of the household; Captain Melchior commander in chief of my armies; Abbé Daillot, my grand almoner, and Madame Bruno maid of honour to the queen. These appointments being complete, the grand almoner, the minister of the finances, and the master of the household, roared out a bacchanalian song, after which the queen and her little cousin sung under my royal nose a duet so tender and passionate, that with a prince less mild than myself the singers would have fared but badly.

Coffee was served in the chimney corner;

some neighbours came in to join the family, and I took advantage of the preparation for a *Loto* table, to slip from the company, fully resolved to return on the following Sunday, to visit my happy subjects, and close my peaceable reign.

No. XI.—3d February, 1814.

THE GOSSIPS.

Vivendum recte est cum propter plurima tunc his
Præcipue causis, ut linguas mancipiorum
Contemnas: nam lingua mali perpessima servi.

Juven. Sat. 9.

Let us live irreproachably if it be only to despise the prattle of servants, for there is nothing worse than the tongue of these people.

Madame Choquet, my house-keeper (whom I mentioned in describing my cell)

is not yet fifty-four: she wears very well for her age, and with the exception of her sight, which fails her in a slight degree, she enjoys all her moral and physical faculties. That which she esteems as the most important, and makes the greatest use of, is her speech. A happy formation, seconded by long exercise, has enabled her to find out the way to speak a great deal, very fast, and very long, without fatiguing herself, and what is more, without much fatiguing her hearers.

She is the daughter of an old coachman to the Duke de Villeroy, and was born in his hotel in the year 1760. At fifteen she was admitted among the women of the Duchess, who some few years afterwards, married her to M.r Choquet, the son of her Swiss, then serving in the regiment of the French guard, in the company of St. Blaucard, and esteemed the handsomest corporal in the company. M. Choquet at the revolution entered into the line with the rank of Sub-Adjutant, and had

it not been for a wound, which he received at the battle of Jemappe, and which compelled him to relinquish the service, he would not have been reduced to the necessity of giving lessons in fencing, at fifteen sous per lesson. Madame Choquet has not been more fortunate, and after losing her mistress, not having resolution to derogate from her function, by taking the place of lady's maid, she accepted a situation as portress, which she retained five years: but as ambition in every state increases with age, looking at the produce of her economy, which amounted to not less than 1200 livres, she determined to establish herself as a mantua-maker. Heaven has prospered her endeavours, and Madame Choquet is at this moment mistress and proprietor of one of the smartest work-rooms to be found between the Rue St. Lazarre and La Petite-Pologne.

This is, in a few words, the history of my house-keeper. I must have an exceeding bad memory, if I did not recollect it,

after it has been so often related to me for these ten years past.

This little history is, however, only a necessary introduction to the prattle with which this accomplished model of Parisian gossips entertains me every morning; a small specimen of which I will lay before my readers. They will not find much connexion, nor perhaps much sense, or much indulgence for a neighbour; but the custom of reading our daily papers will doubtless have familiarized them with this fashionable babble.

Madame Choquet comes to me every morning at nine, and begins her business, by preparing my breakfast; during this meal and while my room is put in order, she favours me with these monologues with such a most inconceivable volubility of tongue, as entirely to set all short-hand writers at defiance.

As I listened to her last Monday I took a few notes to assist my memory—Madame Choquet began:

" Perhaps, Sir, you don't find your cream so good as usual; upon my word, 'tis no fault of my mine: Clara did not come to day, and for a very good reason, she has just lain-in; poor woman, this is her seventh; 'tis her husband's present every nine months whether he is at home or abroad. But good often comes out of evil. Madame Dumont, the notary's wife, has given her her child to nurse. You'll ask why so rich a woman does not nurse her child at home; this was her intention, but it is not on account of any suspicions in the head of her husband, because Colonel Dorfeuil, Madame Dumont's cousin, who had his arm broken in Germany last year, has come to reside with them till it is healed; so far is that from being the case, that M. Dumont has caused the child, whom he is not very fond of, to be sent out to nurse. Perhaps he is not wrong, but you'll say the world is so wicked!

" That's what I said the other day to the portress who told me the story—My dear

Madame Barbotin," said I, "if you'll attend to me, look after your gate, and never mind what passes among the lodgers; but this good woman can't resist it, she must gossip. Heaven knows there is no want of subjects in the house she lives in; it is so large—fifteen families! 900 francs, at a penny in the pound, without reckoning Christmas-boxes * * * *. There are very few such doors in Paris. Heaven grant Madame Barbotin may profit more by my advice, than Madame Badureau, portress at M. Beaubois!

"That woman was really the Gazette of the parish. Not a single thing was done in the house, with which she did not acquaint her neighbours. But for her, who would ever have known that M. Beaubois owes his place solely to the interest of his wife? She was thought to have come of a good family, and behold ye, I find she was a dancer in Germany, where she had been the ruin of, I don't know how many Barons. She must have ruined a great

number to make a fortune. She has made hers and M. Beaubois, who was in want of a security to get him the place he solicited, married her without examining any further than her strong box. Fine news! Such a thing was never heard of. The portress learned the history through a brother of the lady's, a fine boy who fell in her path one morning, and who was sent away pretty quickly, as you may very well guess. They procured a custom-house officer's place for him at the other end of the world, and paid all his travelling expenses. Some people say he really was her brother, and some say he was no more her brother than you or I. It is nothing to me, and as the proverb says, 'Every one for themselves, and God for us all.'

"There has been so much talk about this foolish portress, who was turned away for spreading scandalous reports, that she has never been able to get another situation, and is now living upon her daughter Mariette, who is nursery-maid to a Senator.

She is a pretty girl, I had her with me two years as an apprentice. She was to have been married last year to a charcoal factor at Port St. Nicolas. An excellent business, where one knows nothing!

The young man made at least a hundred Louis a year. The match went off; but whose fault was it? Why her mother's. She permitted her daughter to go one Sunday to la Chaumiere* alone with her intended. A young girl of eighteen, without experience! She did not know the difference between the night before marriage, and the day after; not that I mean to say——— Heaven forbid——But certainly in my time girls were married, and before they went to Paphos, to Tivoli, or to Chaumiere. Balls Champêtres have ruined every thing.

" It is very true, city balls are now not much better. Witness twenty pretty Misses

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* A Tea Garden.

that I could mention, who never fail to attend every one, and are not married a bit the more for that: I name nobody, but see what has happened to your neighbour's daughter. She will one day be rich: she is now pretty. For these ten years she has been called the best dancer in Paris; she has danced with all the young men of the capital: how many offers of marriage has she had? Not a single one; and why? Because they avoid girls who dance too well; because it costs more to take a wife five or six times a year to a ball, than to keep two children; because the love of dancing does not agree with the cares of house-keeping, without mentioning many other reasons, which you can very easily divine."

Madame Choquet made a pause here, and as she perceived I was about to take advantage of it by edging in a word, "I beg pardon for interrupting you," continued she, "but I must ask permission to leave you a little earlier to-day than usual. I

have not a moment to lose. I am going to a wedding, if you must know * * *. Yes, really to a wedding! Did you never observe a young girl who sometimes comes with me, little Henrietta, the daughter of a master butcher a few doors from us. One of the richest in Paris. He might have done as many others do, who have not half his fortune, placed his daughter in a smart boarding school, given her masters, and in a word, have made a fine lady of her; but Courtois had some good sense; he had his daughter taught to read and write, and placed her with me to learn needlework. These two years that she has left me, she has been at the head of her father's house, and keeps his books as well as the best of clerks could do. With her twenty years, her pretty features, and her crowns, Henrietta has not, as you may very well believe, wanted admirers. She has refused, that is to say, her father has refused for her, a notary's clerk, a clerk in the customs, a lamp con-

tractor, and a grocer in La Rue de la Verrerie, who counted on her portion to restore his credit. M. Courtois has cast his eyes on the son of a cattle dealer of Poissy. After the nuptials, the good man will leave his shop to the children, and retire to his farm in the Pays d'Auge, where, by way of doing something, he will occupy himself in fattening oxen.

"To day is the betrothing; I must not fail to be there. I have made the bride's linen: it is worth seeing: all in dozens, and so good, and so fine! The father has spared no expense. The young man is a strapping good-looking lad. He has made two campaigns, but this has not prevented him from providing a substitute, for whom he has paid two thousand crowns.

"I must leave you to go and dress the bride,—I understand such things a little,—I have not been a lady's maid for nothing. There will be some talk about the nuptial feast, I assure you: a hundred covers at the

Feu Eternel on the Boulevart du Jardin de Plantes. I know many folks in this part of the world who will not be very well pleased at this marriage. It is enough that things are well done to excite the spleen of the envious. Already satirical verses are written upon it. I have some of them in my pocket. One says that good-man Courtois, will hardly know himself in a merry making; that it is a long while since he has treated his customers; and a thousand other such foolish pleasantries, which don't prevent his being a very good fellow, very serviceable, and one whose only fault is that he bestows his kindnesses in the wrong place. I know something of him; he has just raised my rent, and at the same time has forbidden the goods of an old musician to be sold who lives above me in his house, and who owes him five or six quarters. Whence comes such a preference? Because I am worth something, and the other has not a sixpence. But why hasn't he a sixpence? Because, instead of attending to his scho-

lars, since the death of his wife, he passes all his time at coffee-houses playing at dominos. For it is well said, that a woman is the treasure of a house * * * *."

The tongue of Madame Choquet is like a coach wheel, which inflames and heats by the rapidity of its motion. The more she speaks the more she warms, and the less possible it is to foresee the termination of, or to stop such a torrent of words:—but fortunately for me, and for the ceremony which awaited her, my servant came in as usual, and hastily interrupted her in the middle of her harangue: he knows as well as myself the danger to which we are exposed by permitting her to finish it.

Madame Choquet, after addressing me with the customary final question, "*Is there any thing more I can do for you, Sir?*" retired, dropping me a very low courtesy, and leaving me well convinced that if (as some learned man says) a woman's tongue is her sword, she was full as well qualified to give lessons in fencing as her husband.

No. XII.—12th Feb. 1814.

THE EGOTISTS.

Moi!
Moi! dis-je, et c'est assez.
CORN. Médée.

Myself! Myself! I say, and that's enough.

THERE exist in nature two opposite forces, denominated *centripetal* and *centrifugal*, whose laws, discovered by Huy-

gens, and applied by Newton, govern the physical world. The first of these forces carries forward all bodies in motion, towards one common centre; the second repels them from it: the harmony of the universe results from the happy combination of these two powers. The same theory may be applied to the organization of the social system. Patriotism and Egotism supply the functions of the central forces: the one seeks to assimilate itself with the public interest, from which the other as constantly endeavours to abstract itself. The happiest society is that wherein the equilibrium betwixt these two impulses, is best established. I advance this proposition without considering the immediate inference which may be deduced from it, or the manner in which it may be applied to the time and country in which we live.

It is unjust, in my opinion, that Egotists, the breed of whom (not to say the family) increases to such an alarming extent, should

affect to consider Montaigne as their patron. The author of the Essays did not hesitate to avow, that he belonged to that sect of amiable idlers who make happiness consist in that repose of body, that tranquillity of soul, which their master, Epicurus, assigns to his indolent deities.—Montaigne himself informs us, *that his proper employment, in this life, was to live in careless relaxation, idly rather than busily*; but how can we accuse him of egotism who, of all writers has spoken best on friendship, because he described what he felt? Of all the passions, of all the sentiments of which the human heart is susceptible, friendship is perhaps the only one which precludes egotism. To love, is in some degree to change one's existence,—it is to live in another, for another; it was not (adds Montaigne, in speaking of his union with *la Boëtie,*) *any particular impulse which determined me, it was an undescribable quintessence of all, which having possessed itself*

of my will, led it to incorporate, and to lose itself in her's.

The reputation of egotism, which has been conferred on this philosopher, has the same foundation as his glory. Those Essays have been condemned, while admired, in which he talks to his readers about his person, his predilections, his diseases, his virtues, and his defects. Montaigne has proposed for his object the study of the human heart, to be more certain in his observations, he made them on himself; he speaks of his vices and his merits with the same freedom; he frequently exhibits himself as a proof, but never as an example.

It has frequently been attempted, but always without success, to introduce the egotist on the stage. Fabre, who has painted him in the most odious colours in his *Philinte* (which is not that of Moliere, whatever may be said), has given this personage but a secondary rank, and only employs him to relieve the beautiful character

of *Alceste*. Barthe, though possessing much wit, has produced but a mediocre comedy on the same subject; Caillava has been equally unsuccessful, and the *Egotist* yet remains to be pourtrayed: it is unfortunate that we should want painters for such a picture, at an epoch so prolific in models.

In reading the works of Port-Royal, we know not which most to admire, the vast acquirements of these pious ecclesiastics, or their affecting modesty. In considering that these immortal productions, emanating from this school of taste and reason, were presented to the public with a respectful deference, it is impossible to refrain from laughter at the doctorial pomposity so often affected by the journalists of the day, without any other title to the confidence of their readers than the impertinent monogram affixed to their articles? Who can help laughing at their eternal repetitions of, *I know, I suspect, I contend, and I affirm*. Ah! gentlemen, the Pascals, Arnaults, Nicolles,

and Lancelots, said modestly: "*We believe, it is our opinion.*" They thought the custom of speaking to the public in the first person, proceeded from that principle of ridiculous vanity, which they had proscribed under the name of *Egotism* (an energetic word with which they enriched our language). Pascal goes yet farther, he pretends "*that a christian ought to avoid altogether the use of the pronoun I; that the slightest obtrusion of personal importance is alike incompatible with christian humility and the laws of politeness.*" It must be acknowledged, that in this respect at least, we have never been less religious or less polite than at present.

During a long time, the revolution has been the emissary which we have charged with the full weight of our iniquity: of all the evils for which it has been made responsible, that of having augmented the number of egotists, has been, perhaps the most fully confirmed. Those who acted in

it, as well as those who suffered, seem to have learned, as a general maxim, that the most certain resource is that which is found in one's self; and the devotion best recompensed, that which we cherish towards our own persons. How many, at this time profess aloud that they regulate their conduct on this ungenerous principle, which many indeed, have acted on before, but which at least, they did not so openly avow.

'I was once acquainted with a M. d'Argeville, an officer of dragoons, who lived very pleasantly among his comrades, without any other secret, than that of neither conferring or receiving a favor from any person whatever. Nature had not made him an egotist; he had become so, by system, in consequence of two or three unlucky adventures, which appeared to him to have equally originated in the integrity of his heart: he had lost his best friend, by having rendered him an essential service in

lending him an essential sum, which he was unable to reclaim but by quarrelling with the borrower. In attempting to arbitrate one affair of honor, he made himself two; from one of his adversaries he received a wound which confined him six months to his bed; he killed the other, and was, in consequence, obliged to quit his country for two years. Some other misfortunes of the same kind had sufficed to extinguish his natural benevolence: in order to destroy these feelings, he had adopted principles to which he so firmly adhered, that he would neither have lent a crown to his brother, nor have uttered a word to save the lives of two of his comrades: he frequently repeated that, "*in this world it was necessary to centre oneself within a circle of not more than two feet diameter.*"

It is painful to reflect that one of our most celebrated wits and distinguished philosophers,—that Fontenelle, whose long life must, of all others, have furnished a

train of experience in the human heart; it is painful, I say, to think that this so celebrated man, was tainted, or rather contaminated with egotism, to such a degree as to have sanctioned, under his name, that anti-social aphorism, *that there is no perfect happiness without a callous heart and a good stomach.* This expression, which might have escaped the ingenuity of an egotist, or even the caprice of a philanthropist, could not have acquired a dangerous authority, except in the mouth of a man whose brilliant and fortunate career supplies in the opinion of many persons but a long commentary on it.

Among the famous egotists of the last age, we cannot forget the Marchioness Deffant, who during the last month of the life of her old friend, the President Henault, passed all her evenings with him.—She made her appearance at Madame de Forçalquier's; every one concluded that the president was better, but on his health

being inquired after, "*Alas!*" said she, "*I had the misfortune to lose him this morning, or you would not have seen me here.*"

Every one knows the reply made by Colardeau, when dying, to his friend Barthe, who requested his opinion on his comedy of the Selfish Man, which he came to read at his pillow, "*You may add an excellent trait to the character of your principal personage,*" replied Colardeau, "*say that he obliged an old friend, on the eve of his death, to hear him read a five-act comedy.*"

I should compose a book, instead of a paper, did I attempt to trace, even in outline, the different portraits of egotism, for which society, through all its gradations, supplies me with models. I shall confine myself to one only, which I have accurately observed, and which appears to me to have attained perfection, or rather to have reached the ideal deformity of a defect, to which I know few vices which are not preferable.

Saint-Chaumont has arrived at the age of forty, without having formed an idea, or felt one sentiment estranged from his own person. In order to give full force to that expression.

Que le *Moi* dans sa bouche a plus d'une syllabe.

Myself, with him, exceeds a single word.

He always takes care to couple it with *I; I, myself*, begin all his phrases; he knows no evils but those which *he* feels, no gratifications but those which *he* enjoys: if he is abroad, and it rains? the shower, he is convinced, falls only for him; is he on foot in the streets? he cannot conceive why carriages are tolerated; is he in a carriage? he complains of the rigour of the police, which does not allow foot-passengers to be run over with impunity; all his actions, thoughts, and opinions, are so many answers to those questions which he continually addresses to himself: "*What inconvenience will it occasion me? What advantage shall I derive from it? In what way can it serve me?*

Saint-Chaumont has, in the world, the reputation of an honest man: what then is the value of his word? One of his friends came to advertise him, one evening, that he should have occasion for him at seven the next morning, on an affair in which his entire fortune, his happiness, and that of his family, depended. The appointment is precise, and one half-hour of delay will annihilate all his hopes. Saint-Chaumont promises to be exact; but he never gets up until nine o'clock: he runs a risk of discomposing himself for the whole day, by an infringement of any of his habits. At eight he is still in bed: his friend arrives, presses, conjures him; he rises, but he never goes out fasting; his physician has interdicted him from it, on penalty of a frightful headache: he must fortify himself against the cold; puts on wrappers, double waistcoats, and stuffs his ears with cotton: he sets out, gets into a coach, arrives; the affair was terminated two hours ago; the ruin of his

friend is completed. "What!" says Saint-Chaumont, "it was really a great pity to make one get up so early!"

Last year we were visiting together in the country; one evening, the son of the master of the house, taking a walk in the park, fell into an empty well, the top of which they had neglected to cover, and dislocated his ancle. The gardener announced the accident; some ran to assist the young man, others prepared a mattrass in the saloon to receive him. On this mattrass Saint-Chaumont sunk down in a swoon; several pressed round him, administered hartshorn, and his spirits began to revive. Some one, who mistook the cause of this fainting-fit, thought to tranquillize him by assuring him that the accident was less serious than had been imagined, that the youth had not broken his leg. "*Very good,*" said he, "*but I am not the less shocked at the danger I have run; I was yesterday evening walking in the same place, and the*

very same accident might have happened to myself."

These two characteristic traits of a perfect egotist, render it unnecessary that I should exhibit him in less important particulars; at table, either at home or abroad, always helping himself to the best dishes; at the play, always occupying the best place in the box, without regard to age, rank, or even sex; in the drawing-room, standing in front of the chimney, monopolizing the fire, perfectly regardless of the inconvenience occasioned by its privation to others. At whatever time, in whatever attitude, we observe him, we find him always occupied with himself when awake, and dreaming of himself when asleep.

If my readers desire to see a finished picture of egotism, they will find it in the following fable, by M. Arnault, in which a most ingenious comparison is expressed with great conciseness, energy, and elegance:

LE COLIMAÇON.

Sans amis, comme sans famille,
Ici-bas vivre en étranger ;
Se retirer dans sa coquille
Au signal du moindre danger ;
S'aimer d'une amitié sans bornes,
De soi seul emplir sa maison ;
En sortir, suivant la saison,
Pour faire à son prochain les cornes ;
Signaler ses pas destructeurs
Par les traces les plus impures ;
Outrager les plus tendres fleurs
Par ses baisers ou ses morsures ;
Enfin chez soi, comme en prison,
Vieillir, de jour en jour plus triste :
C'est l'histoire de l'Egotiste,
Et celle du Colimaçon.

THE SNAIL.

With friends, with family unblest,
Condemn'd alone to dwell ;
If danger's least alarm molest,
He shrinks within his cell.

Sole tenant of his narrow walls;
His self-esteem profound;
He issues when the season calls
To join the insects round.

Impure his track, he winds his way
Among the shrubs and flowers;
The fairest his selected prey,
He taints them or devours.

Grown old, like captive mop'd and wan,
Forlorn at home he lies:
Thus, snail-like, lives the selfish man,
And like a snail he dies.

In this charming fable, every line is a thought; a thing worth remarking at a time when ideas are so unusual and verses so abundant.

No. XIII.—26th Feb. 1814.

THE PAINTER'S STUDY.

.... Nec desilies, imitator in artium.
Hor. Ars. Poet.

Do not pique yourself on too scrupulous an imitation.

The word *Artist* is of modern creation, at least in the sense in which it is employed at present: it is useful and convenient; it applies extremely well, and generally, to all professors of any art whatever; but in these latter times we have strangely per-

verted it. In the course of a revolution which tended to equalize, or rather to annihilate all distinctions, it has been made a synonyme to the term *artizan:* it now serves, by courtesy, to designate the condition of a multitude of persons, who have not the slightest pretensions to it. M. Gérard is a painter, M. Houdon is a sculptor, M. Méhul is a musician, M. Talma is a tragedian; Messrs. so and so, the decorators of Chinese recesses, the third violin in the orchestra of l'Ambigu, the noble father of the troop of Montargis, are all *artists.* It is useless to dispute merely about words; but when *words* have a dangerous influence on *things,* it becomes necessary to restrict their application. The facility with which this title of artist is conceded to all who arrogate it, contributes more than we imagine to augment that crowd of young people of both sexes, who after having vegetated some years in the classes and painting-rooms of the Academy, leave it with a title which they choose

rather to retain without profit and without honour, than to descend from by applying themselves to some useful occupation, better suited to their abilities. Thence comes that multitude of daubers, whose framed and glazed specimens diversify the arcades of the Palais-Royal; thence that swarm of unfortunates, who are obliged to skulk in the suburbs, who speculate on the sale of a romance or a waltz, and who attend the season for balls, of which they compose the orchestra, as their sole resource to pay their lodgings, and discharge their tailor's bill.

I met the other day, at the sale of M. de L———'s pictures, the young St. Charles, the son of an eminent watchmaker. He recollected and accosted me. In reminding me that I had formerly introduced him to M. Vien, he brought to my recollection that the restorer of the French school had often assured me that this young man could never succeed in painting; and that I had more than once strongly recommended him to betake himself to that employ-

ment which had rendered his father respectable. Tormented by his ambition for the vocation of an *artist*, he paid no regard to my advice, and took at his own expence a journey to Rome: whence he had returned about four years. Judging, probably, that the meanness of his habit could give me no very brilliant idea of his finances, he took great pains to assure me that he was the most fortunate man in the world, and made me promise to come and see him.

I found him in one of the garrets of the Palais-Royal; he presented his wife to me, a young villager, he informed me, from the province *de Caux*. I confess, I could not help forming a different conclusion respecting her origin. Every thing, in this miserable retreat, bore the appearance of disorder and of poverty, which a varnish of luxury rendered still more insupportable. To divert my attention from the noise and sight of a couple of dirty children, who were fighting with a dog in this small chamber, which served at once for a kit-

chen and a study, the artist requested me to remark the magnificent coup-d'œil which he *should enjoy*, he said, if some good incendiary (by disencumbering him of an opposite house of seven stories high) would remove the only obstacle to the finest prospect imaginable. He at last shewed me his pictures and designs, neither of which contradicted the prediction of M. Vien; all, nevertheless, were chefs-d'œuvre in the eyes of their author, who only waited for a peace with England, to transport this precious collection to London, where he anticipated a certain fortune. "In the mean time," he said, "he lived as an artist, proudly struggling with the inconveniences which sometimes assailed him, and submitting without shame to the necessity which even obliged him to degrade his noble pencil, by painting the petty figure of a travelling lemonade-merchant, or the plebeian profile of a toyman of the gallery *des Bons Enfans*." It was now too late to attack his resolution. What, therefore,

could I do better than commend his philosophy?

On quitting this artist, I went to visit a painter, in order to measure at one coup-d'œil the immense distinction between them. M. N——, after having gained the grand prize, and made the tour of Rome, where the finest models had matured his talents, has returned to his own country, and announced himself by a chef-d'œuvre. This young man is gifted with one of those intellects, glowing with genius and pregnant with imagination, whence issue those poetic creations which take possession of the heart, without even appealing to the ordeal of the judgment. His rivals applauded his success, the government encouraged him by giving him important commissions, and the prettiest women of Paris, to whose preference he is not insensible, contend for the privilege of supplying models for his pencil.

M. N—— resides in the faubourg St. Germain, in a small house, which he has

himself decorated with great taste, and of which his painting-room occupies the principal part: it is truly a sanctuary of the arts, where disorder reigns without confusion; canvasses and sketches are disposed on the easels, beautiful casts after the antique, among which we recognise the torso of the Vatican, the heads of the Apollo and of the Antinous, are ranged in gradation; armour, and modern arms, with draperies of different kinds are thrown on a circle of chairs, in the midst of which stand two long figures, one representing a knight of the fourteenth century, armed at all points; the other, an elegant Frenchwoman of the nineteenth, in a costume which combines the grace of the antique with the charm of modern fashion. A small library, supported by Egyptian pedestals, contains two or three hundred select volumes, among which we remark, in the first range, the works of Leonardo da Vinci, of the Abbé Dubos, of Winkelman, of Montfaucon, the ruins of Herculaneum,

&c. Delille takes his place in his quality of pictorial poet; and Le Sage, Fielding, Richardson, and La Bruyere, are not forgotten, as the painters of manners.

The historic painters of France have disdained, during a long time, to exercise their talents on *portrait*. Mr. N. does not consider himself degraded in exercising that branch of the art which enhanced the reputation of Vandyke, of Titian, and even of Raphael himself. His study was filled with portraits, the greater number of which remained for a partial re-touching of the draperies, a part of his employment which he consigns to his pupils.

The first which attracted my attention represented a member of the mayorality, whose figure was not decidedly ignoble, nor announced a man absolutely imbecile: the original of this portrait had come to town for the purpose of obtaining the post of a Counsellor of the prefecture, and he was anxious to compensate the loss of his silver wand, by the addition of an embroi-

dery of blue silk to his cloak; moreover, as Monsieur the Counsellor was willing to perpetuate to his family the remembrance of his former dignity, he hit on the expedient of having his scarf painted on the back of the elbow chair in which he was sitting.

"This subject," said M. N——, shewing me another portrait, "has occasioned me excessive embarrassment. The original is a foreign petit-maitre, whom two or three simpletons have rendered popular in Paris, during some weeks past. We have had eight grand consultations to discover some method of exhibiting at once the order of St. Wladimir and the chamberlain's key, with which this hyperborean Lovelace is decorated. The problem, you will allow, must have been sufficiently difficult; since one is worn behind, on the left side—the other in front, on the right: I have decided the difficulty, as you see, by placing before my model, a glass *à la*

Psyche, which presents him at the same time in a double aspect."

While we were engaged in this amusing review, the clock struck twelve; the hour at which our Apelles commenced his sittings.

I was about to withdraw: "Wait a moment," said he, "I expect some originals who are worth knowing; you may have the pleasure of seeing and hearing them, by stepping into this cabinet, from which you may retire whenever you please, by the door which leads to the little stair-case.—A carriage stops at the door; those are the models of a family-picture, the head of which is M. le Baron Coquard de la Grivaudière: I shall say nothing to you, either of his rank or his talents: hear, see, and judge for yourself."

From the centre of my observatory I saw advance, or rather roll into the room, an immense rotundity, surmounted with a human head: this was M. the Baron: the

Baroness was one of those personages who would not disparage a company of grenadiers. Her figure was regularly insipid; her arms bony, her feet large, and her bosom flat. Nevertheless, I should not be surprised if she passed in the world for a fine woman. Her two children were of sufficiently amiable appearance, being but slightly equipped with the masculine graces of their mother.

"Here we are," said the Baron Coquard (as he gave his *witchourat* and his lady's tippet to a servant in a brand-new livery) "but be quick Sir; when people pay as I do, they have a right to expect to be served both well and expeditiously."—"Let us set about composing the groupe," replied M. N—, "have you any particular ideas on this subject?"—"Ideas! I have a thousand; but I give the preference to the most simple of them. You shall paint me in my park, fishing with a rod and line in my great basin; and you must take particular care

to shew one of the wings of my house. I shall bring you a plan of it: but, above all things, let the water I am fishing in be as clear as crystal; I have a particular reason for it. And you, Madam—I wish to be painted at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, at the moment of an eruption, explaining that inexplicable phenomenon to my children—'tis an historical fact."—"Very well, but how am I to paint in the same picture Madam the Baroness at the foot of Vesuvius and Monsieur the Baron on the border of his basin, in his estate at Brie? We have, like the dramatists, our three unities, and that of place is what we are least permitted to violate."—"With good perspective," replied M. Coquard, "you may do any thing. Make what arrangements you please, I shall not give up my mansion."—"And I stick to Vesuvius," said the lady. "I see but one mode of reconciling these things; I will paint Madame in a summer-house (on the brink of the canal in which

Monsieur is fishing) and shewing to her children a coloured print of Vesuvius, in which they shall be all three represented conformably to historical fact." "Very good!" cried the Baron, "folks will be puzzled to make out the meaning of it!"

After half an hour's sitting, which enabled the painter to prepare his sketch, the financial baron departed, resigning his place to an author, who sat for his portrait, in order to have it engraved as a frontispiece to an ancient edition of Plutarch, which he had encumbered with insignificant annotations. This ridiculous pedant, well known for his fatuity and his *outre-cuidance*, felt convinced that his image in copper-plate would have a marvellous effect at the head of an assemblage of illustrious men.

A young lady now made her appearance, whom I should have taken for the model of Gérard's Psyche, if the ravishing expression of her large blue eyes had not apprised me that love had already passed through them. I could not cease admir-

ing the delicacy of her figure, the blooming freshness of her complexion, a thousand graces already formed, and others just expanding. The painter surpassed himself; the portrait, now nearly finished, approached the perfection of the original. After this beautiful creature had sate some minutes; "My husband," said she, with a timid and embarrassed air, "intends coming to-morrow to fetch my portrait; I request, Sir, that you will find some pretext to detain it, and make a copy of it, which I design" (her voice became less firm)— "For a friend whom you wish to surprise?" continued the painter rapidly.—"Yes, Sir, one of my earliest friends."—"We are accustomed to these little secrets of friendship; and on your's, you may be perfectly easy."—"I request, Sir," added she, with more confidence, "that the copy be so like the original portrait that it may be mistaken for it."—"It will be mistaken for it, Madam; I engage it will be mistaken for it." M. N—— uttered these last

words with a peculiar smile, and a blush in the young lady's cheek, explained to me the malignity of it.

The other personages who succeeded to the sitting-chair, were without physiognomy: I soon left them to contemplate the lay-figures.

No. XIV.—12 March, 1814.

THE NEWSMONGERS.

Pereant qui nostra ante nos dixerunt.

Prov. Lat.

Perish those who anticipate us in telling the news.

Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.

Persius, Sat. 1.

It is nothing to know a thing, unless others are sensible that we know it.

One of the most general and whimsical propensities of the human mind, is the

avidity we have for hearing and disseminating news;

Est natura hominum novitatis avida.*

I recollect to have heard it said by one of the noblest and most enterprising characters of the last age, "I must have adventures, no matter whether bad or good; I can never sleep contentedly unless I am in the Gazette."

How many persons, with some sincerity, might make the same avowal! This curiosity, without object, and usually without profit, exalted in some people to almost an habitual mania, constitutes that race of newsmongers, which it is necessary, in order to distinguish accurately, to divide into three classes. The Park Newsmongers, the Tavern Newsmongers, and the Newsmongers of the drawing-room.

Les nouvellistes de jardin, de Café, et de Salon.

The first of which, the celebrated *Metra*,

* Human nature is eager for novelties.

and the Abbè *Trente—Mille-Hommes*, were formerly the prototypes, occupies itself exclusively with politics.

The second embraces politics, and the literature and news of its department. The third forms the most eminent class of newsmongers; its *forte* is every thing, and its jurisdiction without limits.

Among the numerous successors of those two accomplished *Cracovistes*, whom I have just mentioned, one of the most distinguished, is the indefatigable Rigolet. He is up before seven in the morning; after having interrogated his milk-woman respecting the force and march of the enemy, he hastens to the Tuileries to inspect the journals: these he reads from one end to the other, very frequently without perceiving that he is but repeating the text of what he read in the Moniteur the preceding evening. The two following hours he passes at the *Place du Carousel*, waiting the arrival of the Couriers: by the gallop of the horse, by the very attitude of its

rider, he has already divined the nature of the despatches, of which he speaks forthwith, with as much assurance as if they had been addressed to himself. His ear catches a distant report; it must be the cannon of the *Invalides!* fortunately the wind blows another way, scarcely permitting him to hear it, he therefore still retains the hope of being able to recount the victory, announced by this signal, as a special piece of intelligence. He now proceeds to the Italian boulevart, to expatiate with two other profound politicians, who rendezvous there every day at the same hour. Here they arrange the principal facts which they are to put in circulation during the day; and in order to avoid the geographical errors, which such gentlemen frequently commit, they are careful to consult one of those maps of the theatre of war, which are sold in the print-shops. The crowd surrounds them, and Rigolet, a toothpick in his hand, and his spectacles on his nose, continues, nevertheless, to point out the points occu-

pied by the armies, and the position which each of them ought to take up, in order to avoid an inevitable defeat. I was a witness some days since, of one of those military dispositions, and could not help hinting to General Rigolet, that he had drawn up his army in order of battle in a river, which he had mistaken for one of our great roads. Their materials collected, and their memory well charged with the names of towns and villages, of army-corps and generals, whom they defeat and disperse with the greatest facility, our three newsmongers in-chief separate and take their stations, one at the Luxembourg, another at the Palais-Royal, and the third at the Tuileries. This last post, the most important of the three, is confided to the redoubtable Rigolet. At about two o'clock, no matter what weather, we are sure of finding him at the *Petite-Provence*, in the midst of a circle of old politicians, uttering his random and ridiculous discourses on the interests of the belligerents, on the cossacks,

the allies, and the levy-en-masse, and figuring on the table with his umbrella stick, the dispositions of a battle which must certainly take place in a few days, and of which he is the man to announce beforehand all the particulars, the number of prisoners, of killed, wounded, and missing. Notwithstanding the respect in which his decisions are held, doubts are sometimes suggested as to the authority of his information. On such occasions, nothing can be more ridiculous than the tone of superiority he affects, and the sapient and mysterious air with which he exhibits a letter from his son, an army commissary, "who ought," (adds he, with a smile of disdain and irony) "to know the movements of the army which he provisions." If this irrefragable authority does not immediately silence his opponent, the president Rigolet puts up his spectacles; coldly salutes the company, and marches off, to the great mortification of this auditory of fly-catching

politicians, who listen to him with their ears pricked up and their mouths open.

Before he returns home to dinner, he never neglects to call at the Exchange, and in the state of the stocks, whether high or low, he always finds fresh confirmation of his intelligence, and a new argument to support his conjectures.

I stept by accident, the other night, into a coffee-house at the foot of Pont-Neuf, which I had never entered before: (I say it with shame, I, who from taste still more than habit, pretend to know Paris, at least as well as the late Hurtaud, the lexicographer, whose dictionary, whatever Louis XV. might have said of it, *is a very incomplete inventory of this capital.* The *Café Manoury*, (so it is called) retains something of the gothic, which could not but have an agreeable effect to a man of my age; here is neither bronze, gilding, nor crystal; instead of granite or mahogany stands, there are large oaken tables, with slabs of red

marble, and the good banquets of the Arras tapestries, furnish as heretofore, the interior of the apartment; the bar is occupied by a corpulent man, who by his dexterity in breaking sugar, seems to have passed at least twenty years in that employment. The excellent coffee, served with great attention in cups of old china, which, notwithstanding their thickness, contained a considerable quantity—altogether contributed to transport me back to the days of my youth, and the people who surrounded me, were calculated to prolong this pleasing illusion.—I thought at one moment that all the old politicians of the arbour of *Cracovie,* of the great alley of the *Palais-Royal,* and the cellars of *Procope,* had risen to rendezvous at the Café *Manoury,* where I recognized to my great surprise, the originals of three little designs which I had bought in the morning of Martinet.

Being tired of listening to disquisitions on the war, I quitted the politician's corner, and approached a table where five persons

were listening to a sixth, with an eagerness of curiosity which exhibited itself in their figures, in traits more or less ludicrous. The oratorical newsmonger was a furrier living in the *Rue Bertin-Poirée;* before I had been advertised of it by one of my neighbours, I had divined his profession, which indicated itself in his *witchourat* of cotton velvet, doubled with an old fox-skin fur, and in his little sable muff, which betrayed the marks, of at least, fifteen years service. This parochial newsmonger related without once stopping, (and without any other transition than the words, "*you bring to my recollection,*" addressed to persons who had not opened their mouths,) an accident which had happened to one of his lodgers, who had nearly been suffocated by the fumes of charcoal; an adventure which had occurred the same night in a house in the *Rue de la Monnaie,* where the principal lodger returning home to escort a party of ladies to the Café Conti, had mistaken for a robber, and given in charge to the watch,

a young man, a shopkeeper in the neighbourhood, who had come to present a bill to his wife.

Our furrier afterwards entertained the little assembly with the organization of the national guard, in which he was about to be promoted to the rank of a serjeant; with the arrest of a young person who had furnished an apartment on credit, on the promise of a lieutenancy of dragoons; with the bankruptcy of a dealer in earthenware, in *Poulies* Street, who had nearly three hundred pounds on his books; with a duel fought with swords by two water-carriers, and finally with an account of a sermon to be preached by a canon of Notre-Dame at St. Germains-l'Auxerrois during the *passion week*.

Let us leave these bourgeois newsmongers, whose insipid absurdities have so long supplied food for our theatres, and celebrate a more important personage of this kind; my readers have already glanced their eyes on Cleon. This perhaps is the most com-

municative creature in the world: the pleasure of hearing and of telling something new, is in his estimation, the greatest gratification which it is possible for a human being to enjoy: he scribbles forty notes a day, runs from anti-chamber to anti-chamber, from toilette to toilette: he goes from the Tuileries to the Exchange, from the Exchange to the Tortoni Coffee-house, and makes more noise in the evening, in a saloon, with the news he has collected, than the public crier in announcing two victories. Like a certain quadruped, to whom, in his voice and ears, he likewise bears some resemblance, he finds an aliment in every thing,

Et brouté également le chardon & la rose.
Brouzing alike the thistle and the rose.

He knows of no evil but those things with which you are already acquainted, nor of any good but that of which it is in his power to inform you. He acquaints you with the same satisfaction that a province is exposed to famine, or that it is enriched by an ex-

traordinary abundance; that Lima has been swallowed by an earthquake, or that new islands have been discovered in the ocean: he brings you with the same eagerness, the news, that your only daughter is safely brought to bed, or that your son has been wounded in the last battle. He never fails to be at the first representation of a new piece, and hurries out before the conclusion, in order to be the first to announce its success or condemnation. After having exhausted all the topics of public interest, and displayed all his letters respecting them, Cleon commences the chapter of anecdotes: Madame N—— is going to take the waters, for a complaint on which her physician himself is afraid to pronounce decidedly. A court intrigue, (of which he was undoubtedly the instrument) will shortly involve a charming woman in insurmountable ridicule.—A literary man has communicated to him, in confidence, a Satire like one of Juvenal, of which, Cleon furnished him with the principal traits. A

celebrated dancer has changed since yesterday, the cypher on her carriage: it is feared that she will finish at last, by exchanging it for a *number*.—A woman has been delivered of a child with four hands, in a house where a famous critic lies on his death-bed, &c. &c."

Next to public events, the kind of intelligence which Cleon most delights to traffic in, is the reputation of women; in three evenings, this drawing-room Cossack will find the means to sacrifice, without mercy, the reputation of thirty mothers of families.

But in a deficiency of other victims, this magnanimous newsmonger, does not hesitate to acquaint you with the good turns done him by his own wife; with the reasons which induce him to expedite the marriage of his daughter, and with the indiscretion which has occasioned him the loss of his best friend; in fine, the idea of his own death would not be at all afflicting to him, if he could find some means which

would enable him to disseminate the mournful tidings of it himself.

This character of the newsmonger, which has not yet been introduced on our stage, has been sketched in the excellent comedy of the School for Scandal, by Sheridan, the English Orator. In this piece, two newsmongers relate to the friends of an injured husband, that he, instead of compromising his conjugal dishonour by a legal process, has fought a duel with his wife's gallant: the fact is undoubted; both them attest it; but the one believes that the affair was determined with swords; the other, more positive, insists that it was decided with pistols. He gives by way of proof, the details of the encounter, which took place in an apartment. The husband received his adversary's bullet in the middle of the thorax, while his ball, less dexterously aimed, after missing the lover, struck a little bronze statue of Shakspeare, passed out at the window, and wounded a postman who was coming up to the house with

a letter from Northampton. These gentlemen had only made a trifling mistake, no such combat had taken place; they are set right, by the husband, who assures them of it himself, in addressing to the newsmongers of the l'Ecole de Médisance, this line of our *Menteur*—

Les gens que vous tuez se portent assez bien.
The persons you kill are perfectly well.

No. XV.—23d APRIL, 1814.

THE DEATH OF THE HERMIT.

Vixi et quem dederat cursum fortuna peregi.

I have lived; I have finished the task which nature assigned me.

THE moment is come. I feel that I shall not survive this day, and I avail myself of an effect of my fever, which supplies my blood and spirits with a degree of activity, to trace the last lines which will fall from my trembling hand.

In that hour when we must resign, whatever has been bestowed on us, when no source of satisfaction remains to us, but that which results from the good we have done, or which we may yet be capable of doing, I shall let no thought escape which my feelings may have carelessly suggested, and which has not been sanctioned by reflection.

In drawing, about a year since, the painful picture of the departure of *la Chaine*, I spoke of *a young man, of prepossessing appearance, whose eyes were suffused with tears, and whose muscles were in convulsive agitation.* This young man, whom I may now be permitted to designate more explicitly, was named *Rateau*, and was formerly a subaltern in the Parisian Guard. He was implicated in the conspiracy of *Mallet*, an attempt, the avowed object of which, did not justify its temerity.

Condemned to a worse punishment than death, he was sentenced for life to the infamy of the gallies. Let me be allowed to

exert a dying voice in his favour, and to invoke in his behalf the beneficence, the justice of a prince whose benefits preceded his presence, and whom heaven restored to his country to repair every injury, and to alleviate every misfortune.

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"*Wednesday, 22d April,* 1814.

"The Hermit of la Chaussée-d'Antin is no more: at four yesterday evening, he closed his eyes in the sleep of eternity, having attained the age of seventy-three. As the Hermit has become by accident a public character, and as his Essays have had considerable success in the world, I considered it my duty, in quality of kinsman and executor, to give some account to his friends, (among whom he always felt pleased to reckon his readers) of the last moments of a relative, whose memory I have so much reason to cherish and revere. I

imagined likewise, that these details, in which his characteristic discernment may be so clearly recognized, would not be misplaced at the end of his speculations on manners.

"I was less alarmed than I ought to have been at the progress of a malady, of which my uncle himself had informed the public, and the assurances of the physician had contributed, equally with my own observations to disarm any apprehension as to the results. The Hermit spoke of his approaching dissolution with so much freedom, nay, sometimes with so much gaiety; I remarked so little alteration in his features, so little diminution of his moral or physical faculties, that I persisted in believing that the idea which exclusively occupied him, was nothing more than the text of one of his subsequent Essays.

"It was only on Sunday last, on finding at his bed-side a notary, to whom he was dictating his will, that I found myself assailed with presages, the impression of which, I

could not controul my feelings sufficiently to conceal—My dear Earnest, (said he with a smile full of sweetness) every thing surprises you, because you do not prepare yourself for any thing: call to mind the judgment you once passed on Madame Lineuil,* and do not give way to immoderate grief, because you have flattered yourself with hopes which it was unreasonable to indulge. To die, is one of the clauses in the contract of life, and I have been fortunate that my hour for its fulfilment has been somewhat procrastinated, since it has enabled me, before I close my eyes for ever, to witness the dawning of a day, which appeared to be finally extinguished, or which, at least, seemed destined never more to rise for me. If nature had left to my own choice the moment for paying this debt, could I have selected a better? I have seen, contrary to all probability, the ac-

* In a preceding number of the Hermit de la Chaussée-d'Antin.

complishment of that grand restoration which is preparing new ages of prosperity for my country; I enjoy in anticipation all the advantages reserved for my successors, with the certainty of not becoming a witness of the last struggles of ambition, folly, and intrigue; struggles which may yet be made to retard the re-establishment of an order of things where probity and merit will constitute the only claims to the estimation of the country and the favour of the prince. I admire as a man, the singular example of magnanimity displayed by an Alexander, who may truly be denominated the great, and it is only as a Frenchman that I have some regrets in contemplating events which militate against the glory of my country, whose immediate consequences, perhaps will not be unmingled with mortification, and whose advantages will not be reaped without more than one sacrifice."

"The physician arrived at the moment when my uncle, animated by what he called his prophetic spirit, began his course of

predictions: he imposed silence on the sick man, and obliged him to allow his body some repose, forbidding him to exercise his head. The Hermit entrusted me with some billets to deliver, and requested me to return early the next morning. It was in vain that I insisted on passing the night with him; he would not permit it.

"In the morning, notwithstanding all my diligence, I found myself preceded in my visit by Madame L* * * my uncle's most intimate friend, of whom he has frequently made mention in his Essays: her presence appeared to have reanimated him, and my hopes began to revive.

"The morning was serene: the Hermit received several visits, read the journals, and introduced himself a discussion on public affairs, the consideration of which had exclusively occupied him since the commencement of his illness.

"It will readily be believed," said he, "that my opinions, at this time, are disinterested, and that my wishes are unmingled

with ideas of personal advantage. There can be no repose, no possible happiness for France, but in the bosom of that monarchical constitution which Montesquieu has described with so much eloquence, and whose advantages are practically exemplified in a neighbouring nation. The Chevalier de N—— contended against this proposition, and spoke in favour of a *pure*, that is to say, an absolute monarchy, in the tone of a man who repeats a lesson, half learned, and who imagines *himself* supporting principles while he is but defending his prejudices. 'Ah! M. le Chevalier,' replied the Hermit to him, 'for heaven's sake, do not be more *a royalist than the King*, it is he himself who requests it of you—your actions and your exhortations will be vain, the age will take its course, and we have no alternative but to go along with it; you will never again be able to persuade any one, that despotism, even under a good prince, is not the worst of all governments. In proportion as the French che-

rish the Bourbons, whom the bounty of heaven has restored to them, they will find a security for their throne, even in the very principles which reversed it: this security can only emanate from a state of things which identifies, in some sort, the nation with the government; which confirms the royal authority, and guarantees public liberty; which places the independence of the tribunals above all fear or influence, and which establishes at the same time the responsibility of ministers and the inviolability of the monarch. Maintain, above all the rest,—maintain, with certain legal restrictions, that liberty of the press, the value of which was sufficiently demonstrated by the pains which Buonaparte took to suppress it. From that day when the right of thinking is repressed, when perhaps a book has no chance of appearing without having been degraded or mutilated by the censor, the debasement of the nation is completed, and tyranny no longer knows a limit: thence we may date that deluge of absurdities, of

crimes and illusions with which France has been inundated during ten years, and which resulted not less from the imbecile credulity of the people, than from the unprincipled audacity of the government. We may apply to its chief, that expression of Luis de Haro, the Spanish ambassador at the conferences of the Pyrenees, when his opinion was asked of Cardinal Mazarin: "*he was a great man,*" replied he, "*but he had a great fault, which was, that he was always endeavouring to deceive every body.*"

I saw that my uncle had greatly fatigued himself with speaking. Madame L——— made me a sign to withdraw two or three Interloctutors who unmercifully persisted in the dispute; I was obliged to call the doctor to my aid. He entered, saluted the company with a true Hippocratical gravity, approached the sick man, felt his pulse, considered a moment, took a pinch of snuff, and then politely adjourned the assembly, with the exception of Madame

L———, myself, the Chevalier, and the doctor himself, whom my uncle detained to dinner.

"The doctor expressed concern. 'Let us not act like children,' said my uncle, 'but express ourselves candidly. It is well understood, doctor, that your theories are defective, and that in spite of you or me, death must soon overtake us; let us then endeavour to submit to this necessity as easily as possible:

"Pompa mortis magis terret quàm mors ipsa,"*

as you well know. I have yet some days before me, I wish to enjoy them entirely; I shall get the start of you: I request therefore, that you three will not distress yourselves; we will once more dine together.'

"Without attending to the remonstrances of the doctor, he gave orders to have the table laid by his bed-side, and during the

* The pomp of death is more terrible than death itself.

repast, apparently in better spirits than we had seen him a long time, he talked of nothing but the miraculous event of the restoration. The good Hermit drank a glass of Burgundy to the health of Louis XVIII, and the peace of the world, and requested me to sing, during the dessert, some spirited couplets which had lately been addressed to him by an amiable correspondent of the *Caveau moderne*.

"Towards six o'clock, my uncle experienced a crisis, which made him request to have a few *minutes* interview with Madame L——, alone.—'Fifty years since,' said he to her with a smile, 'I should not have ventured to demand this favour, and you would have felt some scruple in granting me a tête-à-tête equally innocent: time has singular privileges.'

"I was recalled in about a quarter of an hour. Madame L——— was seated before an open secretary, and held in her hand a little ebony coffer with steel fastenings; with this she withdrew, endeavouring

to stifle her sobbings, and requesting me not to quit the patient until her return.

"This lady had scarcely left the room when my uncle felt another convulsion, less violent, indeed, than the former, but which terminated in a long fainting fit. I called the doctor with a cry of terror; he adopted means to reanimate his patient, and assured me, by way of restoring my spirits, that there was not yet any danger.

"'The doctor is right,' added the Hermit, who had heard his last words—'there is no danger. That evil cannot be very formidable, which is the last; and to judge by the trial I am about to make, it is very easy to die. The soul of an old man escapes easily; as it was observed by Seneca, it is already on the brink of his lips. I continue to study myself in these last moments, and it is not without satisfaction that I find myself on the point of ceasing to do what I have been engaged in doing so long. Of what should I complain? Is it not as natural to die as to be born? and do not all the

paths of glory and of fortune terminate at this point? In calculating the general term of life, I have lived several years at the expense of others, I have no longer any reasonable wish to form, nor any other prayer to address to heaven than my *Nunc Dimittis.*

"'Adieu, my friend,' continued he, in a faultering voice, 'we shall see each other again to-morrow, I hope, and you will know my last intentions.'

"The next day, Tuesday, the Hermit slept, almost without interruption; during the ensuing night he was agitated, but without pain. On Wednesday morning he wrote some lines—those which I have affixed at the top of this article—I had not closed my eyes during three days, and I slept on a sofa in an adjoining chamber; at about a quarter past four in the afternoon I was awaked by Madame L———, who announced to me, her eyes overflowing with tears, that my uncle was breathing his last; he opened his eyes, turned them on Ma-

dame L——— and myself with an expression of ineffable tenderness, turned his head on the pillow, and died.

"ERNEST de LALLE."

No. XVI.—30th April, 1814.

THE HERMIT'S TESTAMENT.

..... Relinquendem est.

MART. Ep. 44.

All must be resigned.

THE custom of making wills must be a very ancient one, if we may judge by that of Noah, cited by Eusebius, the principal ordinances of which have been preserved to us in the chronicle of the Monk Cedrenus. I know that several authors have contended against this right, in virtue of which a man

disposes of those possessions which can no longer appertain to him when he shall have ceased to exist. I am of another opinion: it appears to me to be a natural and simple provision, that we should bestow on others the goods we possess, on the condition that they shall not take possession of them until we ourselves have resigned them, and I should have no difficulty in proving that custom is, in this respect, perfectly in unison with reason, justice, and morality. In order, as far as possible, to put this last act of my will out of the reach of that chicane which so frequently introduces itself between two interpretations, I have taken the precaution to make what is called an *olographic* testament; and to ordain as the first clause, that whatever donee shall raise the slightest difficulty on all, or any part of the said testament, shall forfeit, by that act, all advantage resulting from benefactions made in his favour. Let such a regulation as this be generally adopted; let it be made an indispensable preamble in all

acts of this nature, and we should prevent an infinite number of disgraceful lawsuits, by stopping up the source of them. Seeing that I bequeath to my nephew, as the most valuable part of the inheritance I transmit to him, the reputation of an honest man, which I have laboured to sustain during sixty years, I demand from him that he defend it *unguibus et rostro,* against those associations of bravoes, newly re-organized, who attack and maltreat with indiscriminate ferocity both the dead and the living.

I declare that I quit this world in full expectation that I am entering on a better; a thing which must appear excessively probable, even to the most incredulous, at least if he have passed, like me, seventy-five in this.

Nevertheless, as we ought, as far as we can, to die in peace, even with those with whom we have lived at war, I sincerely ask pardon of all the hypocrites I have unmasked, of all the intriguers I have exposed, and of all the fools I have had the

misfortune to laugh at; on my own part, I forgive all who have treated me with envy, hatred, or ingratitude, and all the libellers who tormented my life as much as they were able; I say nothing of some faithless beauties who caused me much uneasiness in my youth; each has, in turn, forgiven the other.

I require that all my papers, without exceptions, shall be transmitted to my old friend Charles de L——, who, after having extracted from them what he shall judge worthy of the public, or of a friend's portfolio, shall himself commit the remainder to the flames. By this arrangement I obtain the right of previously disavowing all posthumous memoirs, all inedited correspondence, and other publications of the same kind, which the gleaners of literature may think proper to publish under my name. I should do an injustice to my friend in forbidding, by a special interdict, the publication of my private letters. We have too often protested against that vio-

lation of the most sacred of sanctuaries; against that indelicacy which makes the public the confidant of our most secret affections, of the unreserved confessions of two souls expatiating in mutual freedom, to have the slightest apprehension of exciting that scandal after my death, which is attached to the letters of Mirabeau, those of Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, and many others.

I do not forbid the compilation of a complete edition of my works, if the risk be warranted by my bookseller and the public; but I insist that my portrait shall not be placed at the head of it; that is a species of vanity of which certain persons would have cured me, granting I had been originally infected with it. I please myself with the idea of preventing the journalists from diverting themselves with the socratic turn of my nose, and the Chinese character of my eyes. If, notwithstanding, the bookseller shall insist on the portrait as an indispensable adjunct, I beg that the artist may be requested to furnish a costume more con-

formable to my character than my profession. I have often laughed at seeing Bertin sighing forth an elegy in a dragoon's uniform; at Gilbert, wielding the lash of satire, in a bag-wig; and at Buffon explaining the mysteries of Nature, in an embroidered coat and laced ruffles.

I expressly forbid my executor to sell my furniture by auction. I could never contemplate without extreme disgust that eager crowd of persons, whom a notice affixed to a piece of carpet has drawn into a house of mourning, into the midst of a family in tears, in order to dispute for the spoils of the dead. In consequence, I direct my nephew to divide between my servant Paul and Mrs. Cloquet, my housekeeper, such of my old moveables as he may not reserve for his own use.

I leave to my nephew in succession, as I received it from my uncle, the Prior *d'Armentières*, my large arm-chair, with morocco cushions, which he is not to banish from his dressing-room, on the penalty of insult-

ing the memory of his forefathers: in giving himself the habit of reposing on it an hour or two every day, he will be continually reminded of some old ideas of probity and morality attached to it, by which, as occasion serves, he may regulate his actions.

I recommend equally to the piety of my legatee, the eighteen family portraits which I bequeath to him. Many of them are from the hands of great masters; there are two by Mignard, three by Rigaud, one by Raoux, and four by Latour. If my grand nephew should ever be tempted, in an hour of necessity, to put up his ancestors to sale, I recommend him to read over a certain scene in the School for Scandal, which, perhaps, may induce him to alter his resolution.

I give to the wife of my friend Charles de L——, my portrait at length, which she has frequently demanded of me, and which I was determined to refuse while living; for this reason, that it is a striking likeness,

and a monstrous caricature. Death will efface the ridicule and enhance the value of the resemblance.

Item. I give to Paul all my wardrobe: the articles it contains are so plain that he may wear them without impropriety, and their style is so antique that they may soon become fashionable.

My books are chiefly surcharged with notes, and are neither sufficiently rare nor curious to tempt the amateurs. If my executor should determine on selling them, he will be obliged to treat with the second-hand booksellers; by which means I shall at least escape that bibliographical celebrity, which consists in having one's name exposed in a collection of catalogues, by the side of those *Filheuls, La Ceus, Bellangers*, and other illustrious and unknown worthies, who have no other reputation than that of their libraries.

I give to my housekeeper my kitchen furniture; requesting her in return to forgive me for having spoken a little freely of

her in a discourse, intituled, *the gossipings of my housekeeper*, which has not yet been published, but which will appear in the last volume of my collection of observations. I give to the said dame Choquet a portrait of the Virgin after Raphael, which she has long coveted, and which, as she has observed a hundred times, will look extremely well at the foot of her bed, between her crucifix and her holy-water pot.

Item. I give her a year's wages.

I wish that no billets should be sent apprising persons of my death; those who are interested in it, will hear of it soon enough; those who are not, have no occasion to hear it at all.

I desire that the ceremony of my funeral may be conducted with the utmost simplicity; that I may be borne directly from my own house to the church, and from the church to my final abode, without stopping the hearse before the theatre *du Vaudeville*, where I recollect to have had a piece brought out twenty years since; nor even

before the office of the Gazette de France, where I once took up my literary residence, lest they should command some one of the establishment to pronounce my funeral oration.

Seeing the instability of our modern cemeteries, and that another has taken possession of the only place in the burying-ground of Montmartre which I had a wish to occupy, I request Dr. N——* to employ some method, supplied by his art, to reduce my body, as promptly as possible to a skeleton, so that I may be admitted, immediately, and without passing through the gradations of the sepulchre, to the catacombs, where I bespoke a place two years since in a walk I took with Madame de Sezanne. Once there, I am certain I shall not be again dislodged; I have never been fond of removals.

I desire that Paul may remain in my nephew's service, unless he should choose to retire to my farm in Normandy: in either case, I give and bequeath to him a pension

of 300 francs, besides 200 francs for mourning, which he may wear in colours, should he like that better.

Item. I give to this good and faithful domestic the time-piece fixed up in my alcove, which he has kept in order during thirty years.

Item. I give to my excellent friend, Charles de L——, in memory of our long friendship, which commenced in India, an engraved ruby, which was presented to me by Hyder Ally, after the invasion of the Carnatic. I have worn it ever since. This memorial will be found attached to my watch chain.

Item. I give to Madame L—— a little black coffer, with steel fastenings, the key of which has been a long time lost; and I request that she will not open it until the expiration of one year after my decease.

Item. I give to the poor inhabitants of the little town of N——, where I was born, the sum of 1500 francs, which the curate of the place will take the charge of distributing.

My debts discharged, and the provisions of this testament fulfilled, I leave the rest of my estate, real and personal, to my grand nephew Ernest de Lallé, whom I nominate at the same time my executor.

Written and signed by my own hand; enjoying the full exercise of my intellectual faculties, at Paris, in my hermitage of La Chaussée-d'Antin, this 28th of March, 1814.

E. J.

The Hermit of La Chaussée-d'Antin.

THE END.

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on 28 December, 2018